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STORIES FROM THE HEBREW

BY

JOSEPHINE HEERMANS

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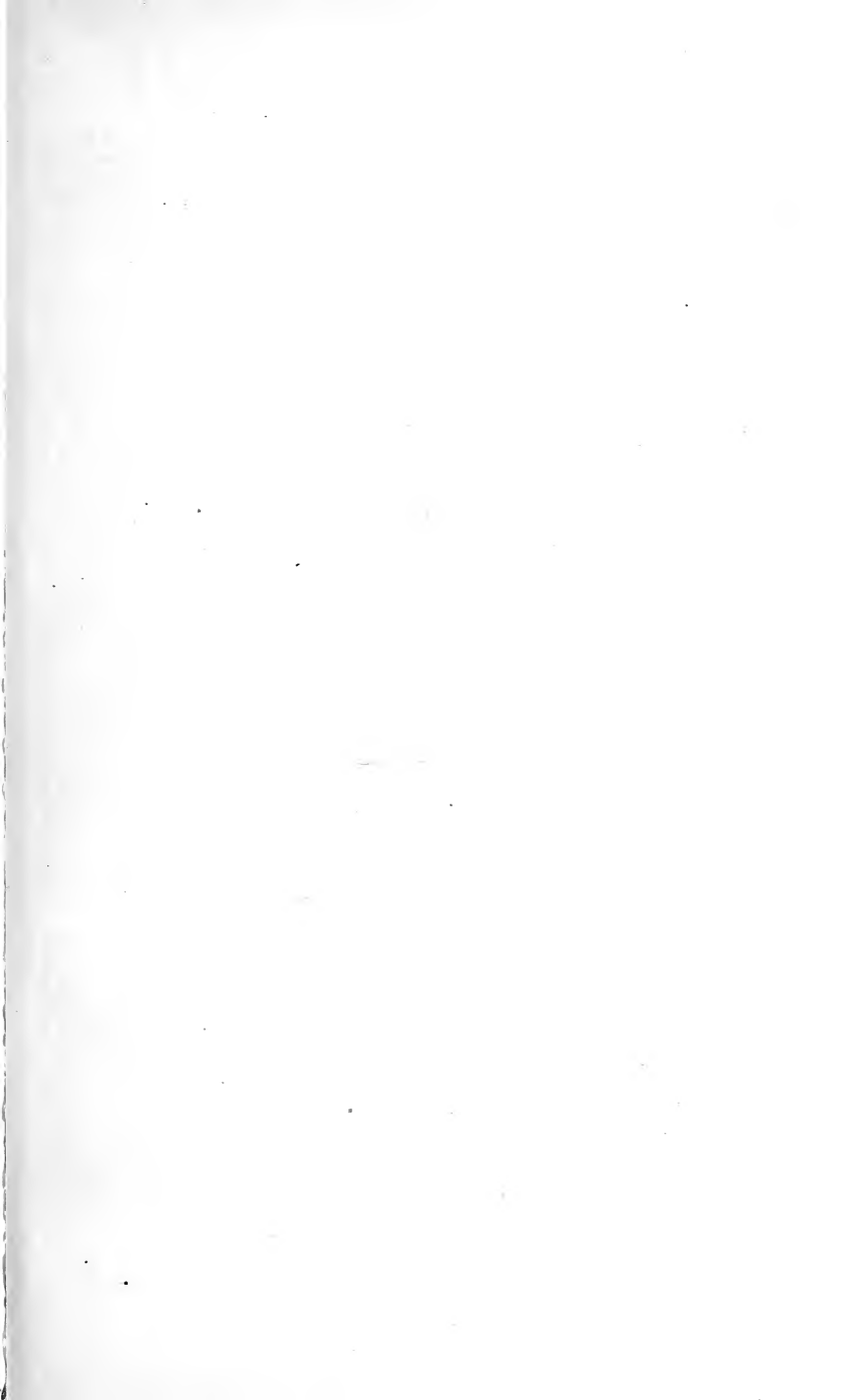
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Michelangelo.

DAVID



STORIES FROM THE HEBREW



BY

JOSEPHINE WOODBURY HEERMANS

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KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

ILLUSTRATED



SILVER, BURDETT AND COMPANY
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INTRODUCTION

THE introduction of Supplementary Reading into the course of study in the common schools is of very recent date. Until within the last two decades the chief sources from which material was selected for school readers were extracts from the Bible, the ancient classics of Greece and Rome, the more modern English and American authors, and occasional pieces from some of the more noted German and French writers. These selections usually represented the very highest and noblest thoughts in literature, and were fitted to elevate and to purify the soul, or to inculcate some great moral virtue. A decided reaction followed, and there has been a complete letting-down in the literary make-up of school readers. This change was felt to be unsatisfactory, and many teachers turned to the beautiful stories and myths in classic lore. Charming as this great storehouse of literary wealth is, to the thoughtful mind, it carries with it a sense of relentless fate. Strangely enough, through this stress period, Biblical literature has been too much neglected. Our children, with all their miscellaneous reading, are getting farther and farther away from those touching stories which so many of a generation or two ago learned around a mother's knee.

There is a deep-seated belief in the minds of thoughtful men and women that many of the best stories for children are contained in the Old Testament. Of all books, the Bible is the only one that commands and subdues the spirit. When children imbibe this spirit it gives them higher and loftier conceptions of life and its duties. For the purpose of interesting boys and girls in this kind of literature, the author of this book has drawn, with rare tact, from Biblical characters, a series of sketches that will receive the hearty approval of many earnest workers in the cause of elementary education in our country.

J. M. GREENWOOD.

SUPERINTENDENT OF CITY SCHOOLS,
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI.

PREFACE

THE preparation of this book for use in the public schools has been the outgrowth of experience in supplementary reading and language-teaching in the grades.

The Hebrew lore offers a rich and interesting field for supplementary reading. Its simplicity renders it desirable in very low grades as well as in grades more advanced.

No attempt has been made to explain the meaning of any incident or to attach a moral to any story, but rather this has been carefully avoided as a great error.

The stories appeal to all readers, because they have entered into the life of man. From the great wealth of incident it is difficult to choose,—the only reason for omitting the stories of the earlier patriarchs and the later prophets being that perhaps they are more familiar than the ones here presented.

As much as possible the Biblical Hebrew has been retained. The co-ordination of clauses by means of *and* is peculiarly Hebraic. Several splendid examples of Hebrew composition are added for the sake of their own intrinsic merits.

It is hoped that the poems following the stories will serve to direct attention to the living influence these incidents in early Hebrew history have had on the thought and work of poets of succeeding ages.

J. W. H.

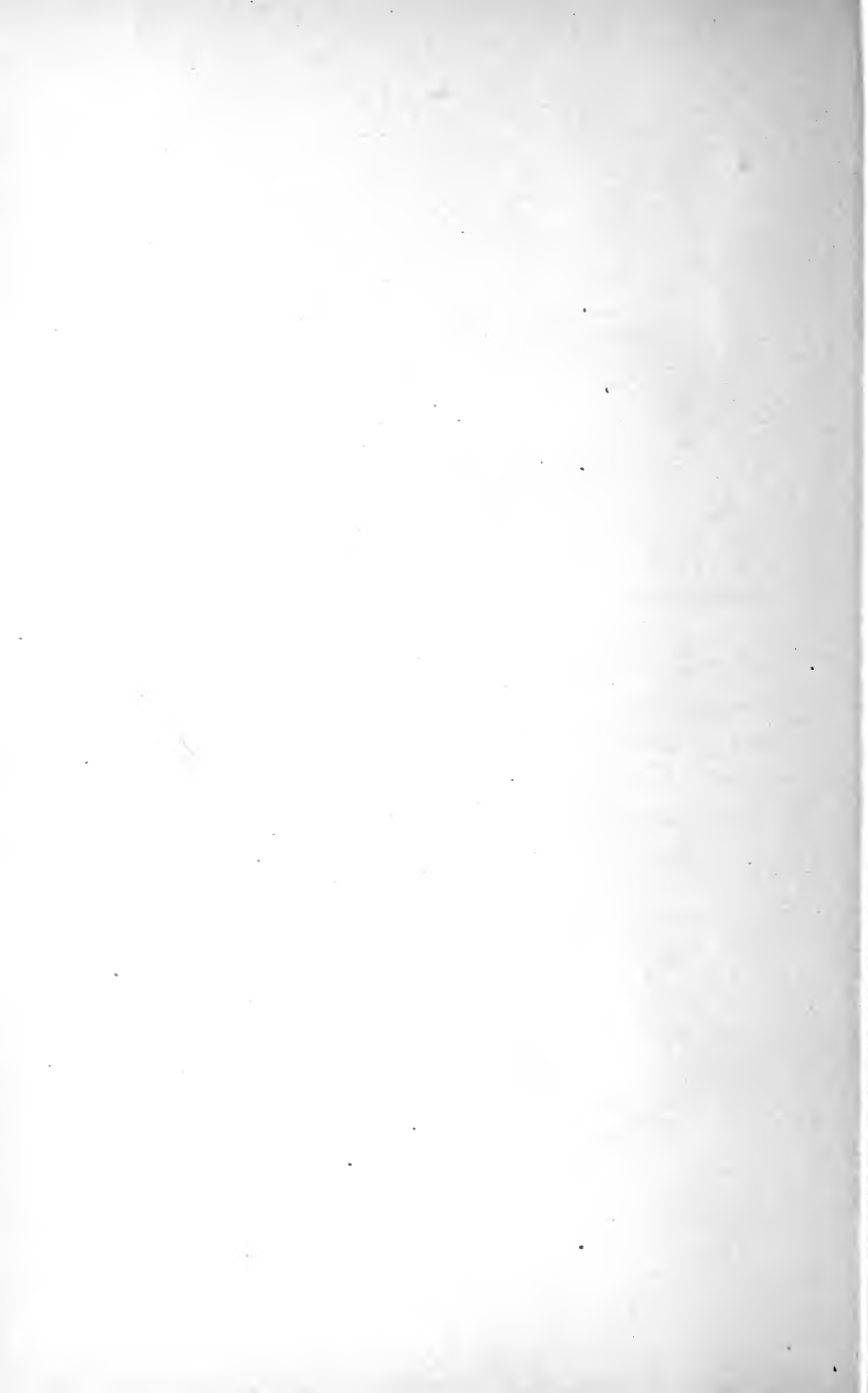
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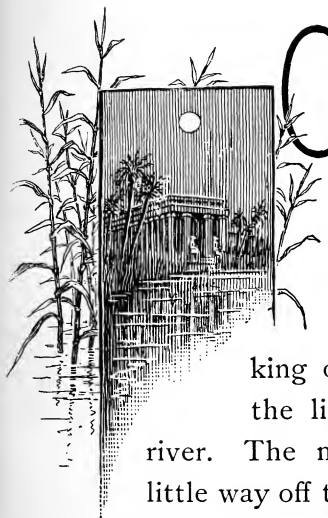
“WHERE lies our path?—a poet, and inquire
What hills, what vales, what streams, become the lyre?
See, where Parnassus lifts his head of snow.
No, no,—a lonelier, lovelier path be mine:
Greece and her charms I leave for Palestine.
There, purer streams through happier valleys flow,
And sweeter flowers on holier mountains blow.”

“I love to breathe where Gilead sheds her balm;
I love to walk on Jordan’s banks of palm;
I love to wet my foot in Hermon’s dews;
I love the promptings of Isaiah’s muse;
In Carmel’s holy grotts I’ll count repose,
And deck my mossy couch with Sharon’s deathless rose.”

—*John Pierpont.*



I.—THE FINDING OF MOSES



ONCE near the edge of a beautiful river in Egypt, a Hebrew mother made a cradle of bulrushes and placed in it her lovely baby boy. She then hid the cradle in the flags growing by the river's brink. She did this to save the baby, for the king of that country had said that all the little sons must be cast into the river. The mother, full of sorrow, stood a little way off to see who would find her pretty boy.

The daughter of the king, a princess, came down to bathe in the river. She discovered the baby and sent a maid to fetch it. When the princess took it in her arms the baby cried. This made her feel so sorry for the little one that she said she would keep it tenderly and get a nurse to take care of it. In her search for a nurse she found the baby's mother, who did not disclose the secret that the baby was hers, but said she was willing to act as its nurse. She took loving care of the baby and never let him know she was his mother. He grew up as the son of the princess, who

called his name Moses, because she drew him out of the water.

One day when Moses was grown, he walked out to where the Hebrews were working. They were in bondage to the king, and their lives were bitter with hard service in mortar, in brick, and in the fields. As he watched them, he saw an Egyptian smite an Hebrew. Moses so loved the Hebrews that he slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. When Pharaoh,¹ the king, heard of it, he sought the life of Moses. But Moses had fled from the face of Pharaoh.

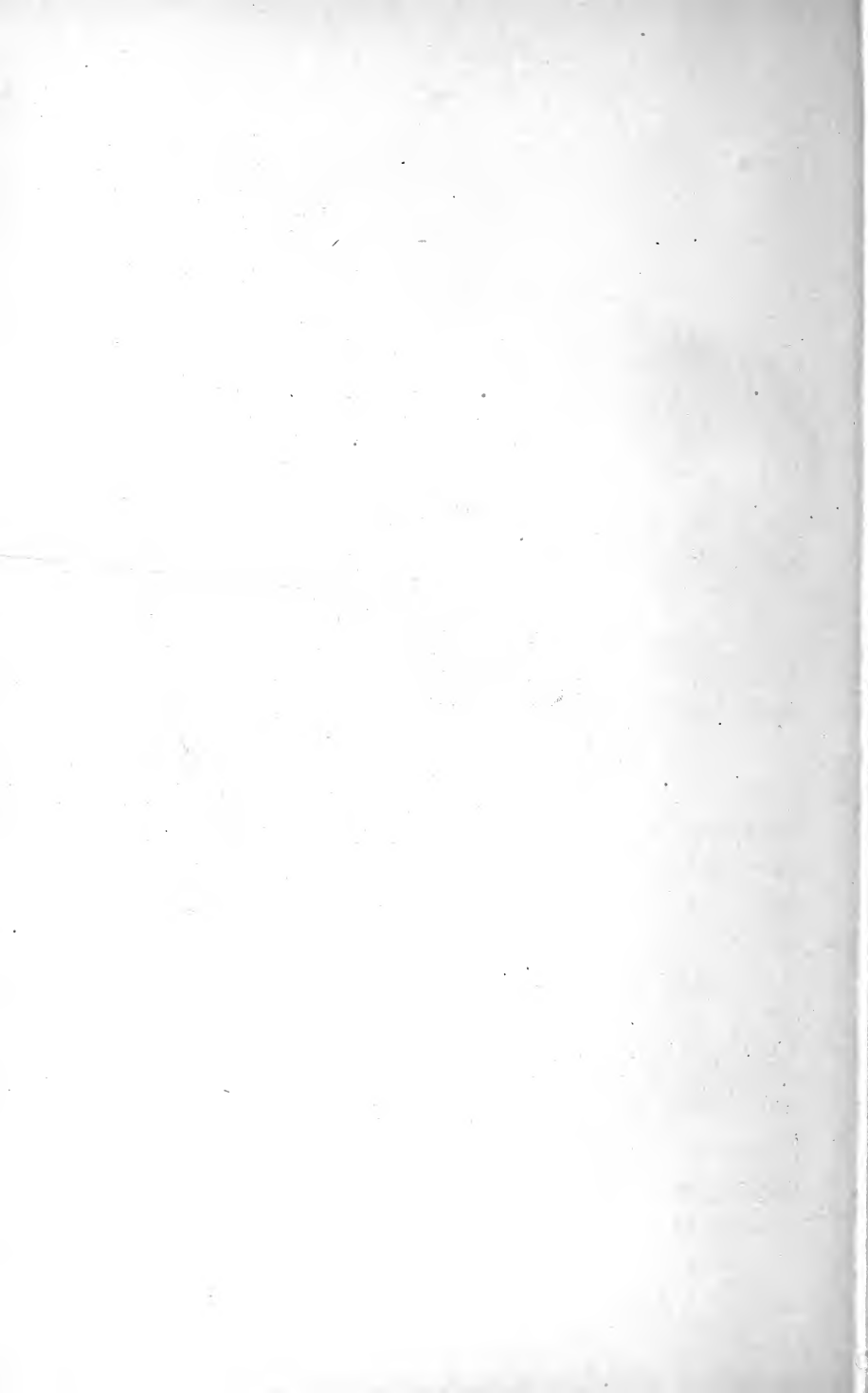
By this act he surrendered his position as an Egyptian prince. Thus, out of love for the Hebrews, whose cause he took up when he killed the Egyptian, he became an exile from Egypt, the land of his birth, and where he had passed his happy boyhood.

He owed much to the loving care of the princess, his foster mother, who had educated him liberally. In after years he became the leader, lawgiver, poet and historian of the Hebrews.

¹Pharaoh' = fā'ro.



From the painting by Delaroche
MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES



II.—THE BURNING BUSH



THE Midianites were nomads, though rich in flocks. When Moses fled from Pharaoh, a man of Midian,¹ Jethro by name, invited him to dwell in his house and gave him his daughter for a wife. Moses became a shepherd and watched the flock of Jethro.²

One day he led his sheep to feed on the sides of Mount Horeb.³ While there he saw a flame of fire dart out of a bush, yet the bush was not burned. Moses stepped aside to see this great sight. He could not understand how the bush could burn with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. Then the voice of God called out of the midst of the bush and said, "Moses! Moses!" "Here am I," said Moses.

Then the voice continued, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Moses hid his face, for he was afraid, yet the voice said, "I know the sorrow of my people which are in Egypt, and I am come down to deliver them and to bring them up into a good land flowing with milk and

¹ Midian = mĭd'i-an.

² Jethro = jĕth'rō.

³ Horeb = hō'reb.

honey, unto the land of Canaan¹; and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel,² out of Egypt."

But Moses feared that the people would not follow him, for he was an obscure man without authority. He asked God what he should say to the children of Israel to make them believe. And God said to him, "Go and gather the elders together and say unto them, 'The God of Abraham, of Isaac³ and of Jacob hath sent me to you.'"

Moses was not eloquent, but was slow of speech and of slow tongue; for this reason he asked that God would allow his brother Aaron,⁴ the Levite,⁵ to be the spokesman to the people. God granted him this favor.

Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered together the elders of the children of Israel, and Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken to Moses. And the people believed that the Lord had looked upon their afflictions and they bowed their heads and worshiped.

But Moses had to be patient, because for a long time the king of Egypt would not allow the Israelites to follow him.

¹ Canaan = kā'nan.

² Israel = ʾĪs'ra-el.

³ Isaac = ʾĪzak.

⁴ Aaron = âr'on.

⁵ Levite = lē'vīte.

III.—THE PILLAR OF THE CLOUD



MOSSES proved by many marvelous works that the Lord was with him. The king of Egypt, believing that God gave Moses great power, at length permitted the children of Israel to follow Moses out of the city. They went with him

a long journey, and the angel of the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light. The Egyptians followed them in six hundred chosen chariots and many other less costly ones, and with these were all the king's horsemen and all his army, and the king himself in the midst of them.

When the Hebrew children saw this host they were sore afraid. They blamed Moses for bringing them away from Egypt. They said they would rather live in bondage to the Egyptians than die in the wilderness with Moses. But Moses told his people to fear not, but to stand still and see what the Lord would show them. He told them that the Egyptians whom they saw that day, they should see again no more, forever.

Just then a strange thing happened : the pillar of the cloud went from before their faces and stood behind them, and stood between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel. It prevented the Egyptians from seeing the Israelites.

Then Moses lifted his rod, and extending his hand over the sea, divided the waters so that the children of Israel went over on dry land. While they were passing over, the waters stood like a wall on either side of them.

The Egyptians pursued and went into the sea after the Israelites, but the waters covered the chariots and the horsemen and all the host of them, and not one was left.

THE SONG OF MOSES AT THE RED SEA

1. I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed
gloriously;

The horse and his rider hath he whelmed into
the sea.

My praise and my song is Jehovah,
And he is become my salvation:
He is my God, and I will praise him;
My father's God, and I will exalt him.

2. Jehovah is a man of war; Jehovah is his name.
The chariots of Pharaoh and his hosts hath he
cast into the sea,

And his choicest leaders into the Red Sea.

The floods have covered them; they went down;
Into the abyss they went down as a stone.

Thy right hand, O Jehovah, hath made itself
glorious in power;

Thy right hand, O Jehovah, hath dashed in pieces
the enemy;

And in the strength of thy majesty, thou hast
destroyed thine adversaries.

Thou did'st let loose thy wrath: it consumed
them like stubble.

3. With the blast of thy nostrils, the waters were
heaped together;

The flowing waters stood upright as a heap;
The floods were congealed in the hearts of the
sea.

The enemy said, "I will pursue, I will overtake;
I will divide the spoil; my soul shall be satisfied:
I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy
them."

Thou did'st blow with thy breath, the sea covered
them:

They sank as lead in the mighty waters.

4. Who is like unto thee among the gods, O
Jehovah!

Who is like unto thee, making thyself glorious
in holiness,

Fearful in praises, executing wonders!

Thou did'st stretch out thy right hand, the earth
swallowed them.

Thou hast led forth, in thy mercy, the people
thou hast redeemed;

Thou hast guided them in thy strength to the
habitation of thy holiness.

The people shall hear and be disquieted;

Terror shall seize the inhabitants of Philistia.¹

Then the nobles of Edom² shall be confounded:

¹ Philistia = fī-līs'tī-ā.

² Edom = ē'dom.

The mighty ones of Moab,¹ trembling, shall take
hold upon them;

All the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away:

Terror and perplexity shall fall upon them:

Because of the greatness of thine arm, they
shall be still as a stone,

Till thy people pass over, O Jehovah,

Till the people pass over whom thou hast re-
deemed.

Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in
the mountains of thine inheritance,

The place for thy dwelling which thou hast
prepared, O Jehovah!

The sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have
established.

Jehovah shall reign forever and ever.

EXODUS XV.

¹ Moab = mō'ab.

“SOUND THE LOUD TIMBREL”

Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!
Jehovah has triumphed,—His people are free!

Sing,—for the pride of the tyrant is broken,
His chariots, his horsemen, all splendid and brave,—
How vain was their boasting! The Lord hath
but spoken,

And chariots and horsemen are sunk in the wave.

Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!
Jehovah has triumphed,—His people are free!

Praise to the Conqueror, praise to the Lord!
His word was our arrow, His breath was our sword;
Who shall return to tell Egypt the story
Of those she sent forth in the hour of her pride?
For the Lord hath looked out from the pillar
of His Glory,

And all her brave thousands are dashed in the tide.
Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!
Jehovah has triumphed,—His people are free!

Thomas Moore.

IV.—THE RAIN OF MANNA



THE children of Israel had been in the wilderness forty-five days when they began to murmur against Moses because there was no food in the wilderness. They said that they did not believe that the Lord was guiding them. They accused Moses of bringing them into the wilderness to starve, and they sighed for the flesh-pots of Egypt. Moses comforted them and told them that the Lord had promised to send them bread from heaven.

While they were talking the glory of the Lord appeared in a cloud from which came a voice saying, "At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the Lord."

In the evening a great flock of quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning all round about lay a small round thing, as small as little flakes of frost. The children of Israel called it manna, for they knew not what it was. It was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.

Every night came the quail and every morning the manna, excepting on the seventh day, which was the

Sabbath. On that day the people did not gather manna because on the sixth day of each week they laid up food enough to furnish them on the Sabbath. Thus the Lord provided for them for forty years until they came to the borders of the land of Canaan.

Just a little while after the children of Israel were supplied with manna and quails they became angry with Moses because there was no water to drink. Then Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, "What shall I do unto this people? They be almost ready to stone me."

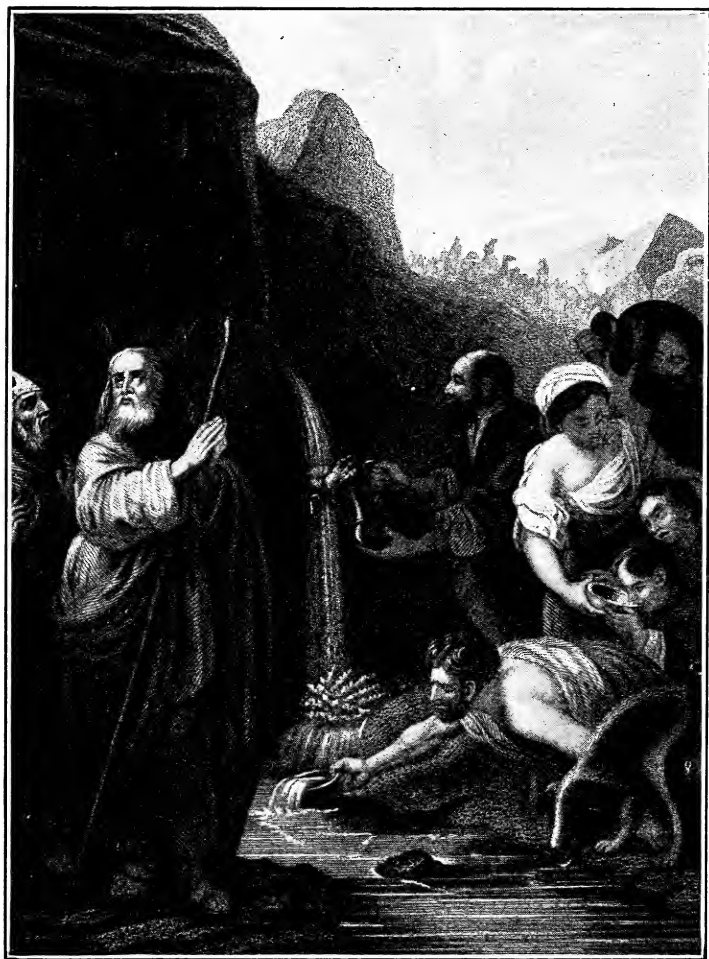
The Lord told him to take his rod and go forward to the rock in Horeb which he should smite with the rod, and there should come out of it abundant streams of water for the people to drink. This Moses did, and the thirst of the people was quenched.

After this great proof of power the Israelites believed in Moses and became obedient to him.

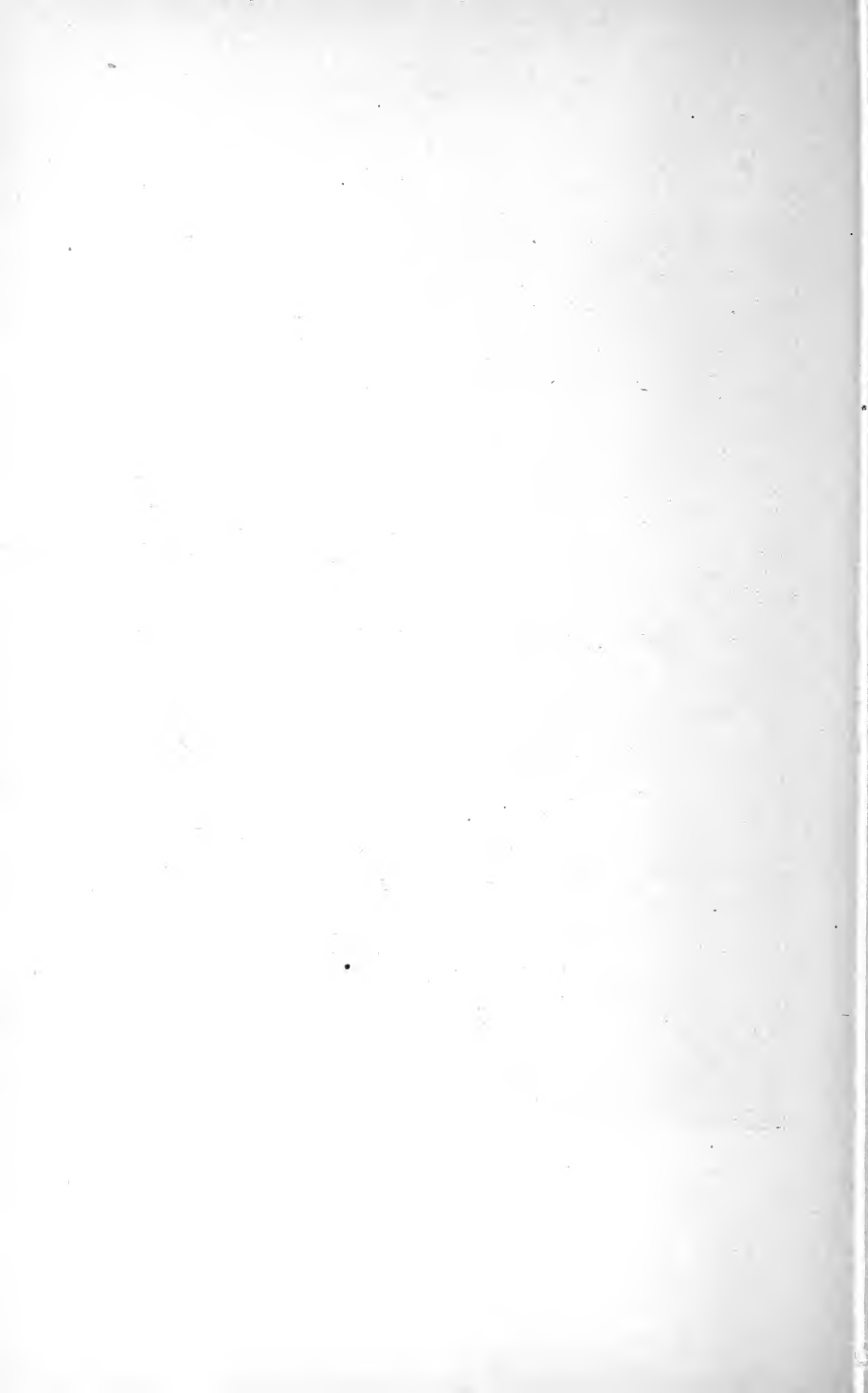
By this time they had reached the desert of Sinai,¹ in which was a mountain of the same name. One day the Lord called Moses up to Mount Sinai, and there, amid thunderings, and lightnings, and quakings, and a thick cloud of smoke, Moses received from God the Ten Commandments written with the finger of God upon two tables of stone.

These commandments the children of Israel solemnly promised to obey. In after years they forgot their promise.

¹ Sinai = sī'naī.



From the painting by Murillo
MOSES STRIKING THE ROCK



Moses continued to be the chief and lawyer of the children of Israel during their pilgrimage in the Wilderness. It was about forty years from the time they left Egypt until they reached the land of Canaan, where their long and dreary journey was to end. This was the land God had promised their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that their posterity should finally possess.

Moses went up unto the mountain of Nebo¹ and from there saw the beautiful land of Canaan. He rejoiced that the wanderings of his people were over, but he was not permitted to set foot on this land himself.

After appointing Joshua² as his successor, Moses died in the land of Moab; but no man knows of his sepulcher unto this day. Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died. His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

The children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days.

There was no other prophet in Israel like unto Moses.

¹ Nebo = nē'bo.

² Joshua = jösh'u-ä.

THE BURIAL OF MOSES

By Nebo's lonely mountain
On this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab,
There lies a lonely grave;
But no man dug that sepulchre,
And no man saw it e'er,
For the angels of God upturned the sod,
And laid the dead man there.

This was the grandest funeral
That ever passed on earth;
But no man heard the tramping,
Or saw the train go forth;
Noiselessly as the daylight
Comes when the night is done,
And the crimson streak on ocean's cheek
Grows into the great sun,—

Noiselessly as the springtime
Her crown of verdure weaves,
And all the trees on all the hills
Open their thousand leaves,—

So, without sound of music,
Or voice of them that wept,
Silently down from the mountain crown
The great procession swept.

Perchance the bald old eagle
On gray Beth-peor's¹ height,
Out of his rocky eyrie
Looked on the wondrous sight.
Perchance the lion, stalking,
Still shuns the hallowed spot ;
For beast and bird have seen and heard
That which man knoweth not.

.

And had he not high honor?
The hillside for his pall,
To lie in state while angels wait,
With stars for tapers tall ;
And the dark pines like tossing plumes,
Over his bier to wave,
And God's own hand in that lonely land,
To lay him in his grave.

.

O lonely tomb in Moab's land !
O dark Beth-peor's hill !

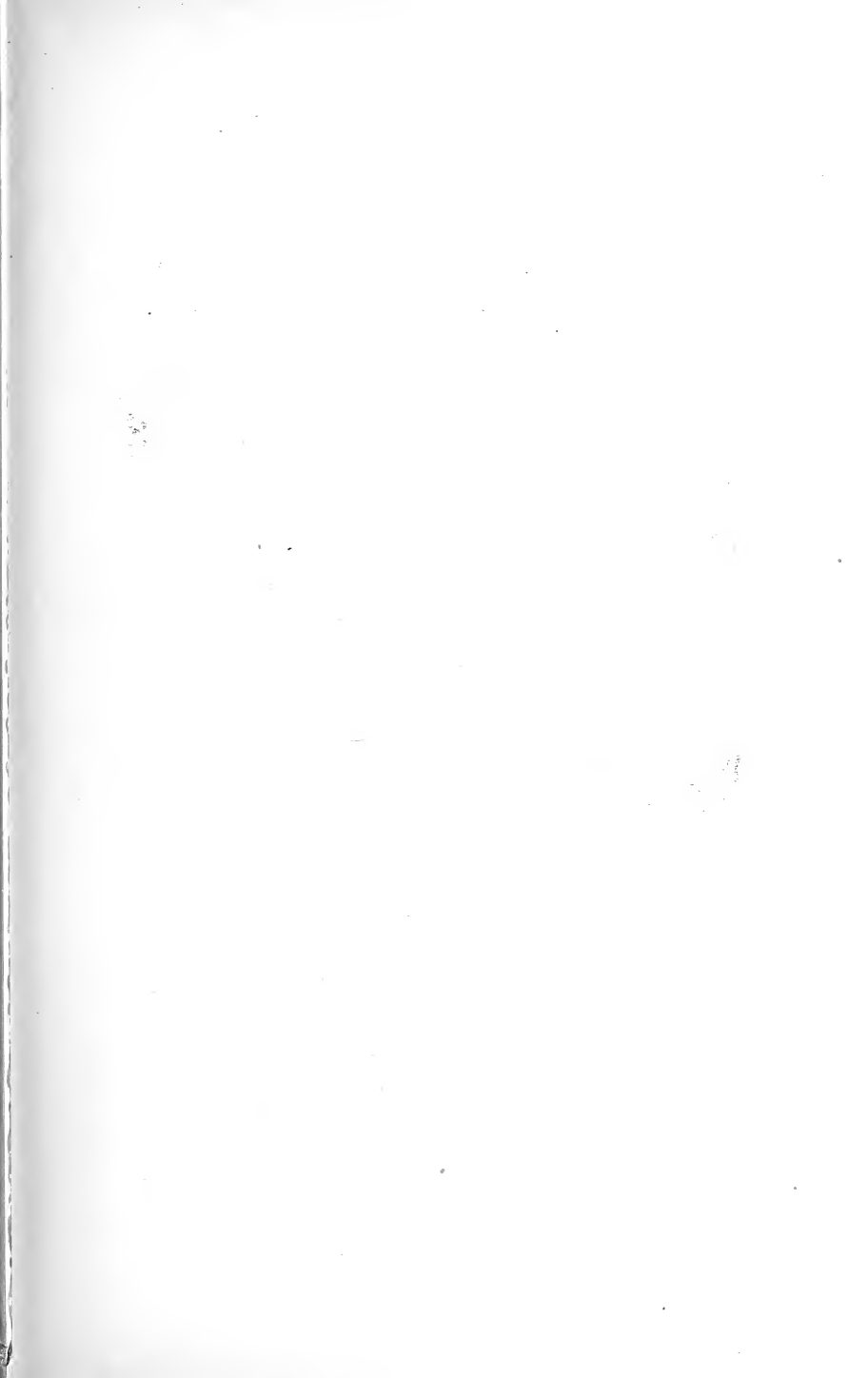
¹ Beth-peor = bëth-pë'or.

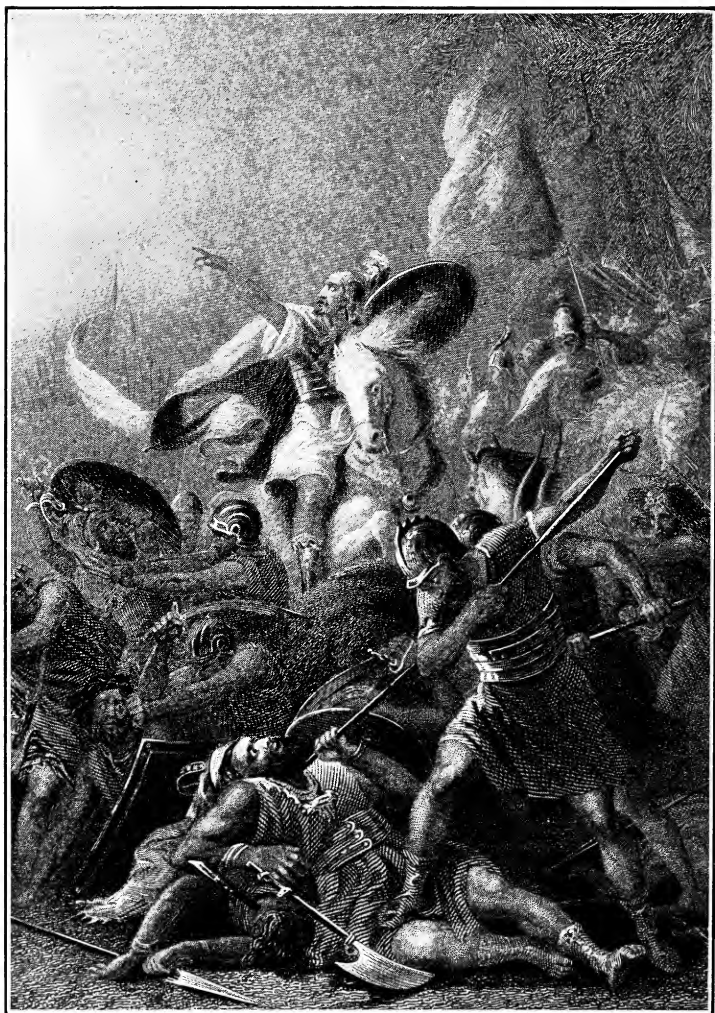
Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
 And teach them to be still.
 God hath His mysteries of grace,—
 Ways that we cannot tell;
 He hides them deep, like the secret sleep
 Of him He loved so well.

Cecil Frances Alexander.

SUGGESTED READINGS :

Hebrew Hymn	<i>Sir Walter Scott.</i>
Lead, Kindly Light	<i>John Henry Newman.</i>
The Death of Moses	<i>George Eliot.</i>
"There Is a Land of Pure Delight"	<i>Isaac Watts.</i>
"My Presence Shall Go With Thee"	<i>F. Thornton.</i>
Nebo	<i>Ferdinand Freiligrath.</i>
"No Man Knoweth His Sepulchre"	<i>W. C. Bryant.</i>





From the painting by Collins

JOSHUA COMMANDING THE SUN AND THE MOON TO STAND STILL

V.—JOSHUA



THE children of Israel wept for Moses thirty days in the plains of Moab, and then, because Joshua, the son of Nun, was full of wisdom, they chose him to be Moses's successor. They relied upon him to lead them across the river Jordan into the promised land of Canaan.

Joshua was a strong leader. Within three days they were on the banks of the Jordan. Here a great miracle took place, for all the Israelites passed over Jordan on dry ground. The waters stood in a great wall on either side and left a wide path for the Israelites, who passed over right against Jericho.¹ After they were across, Joshua had to conquer Jericho and all the other cities on the west side of the Jordan; for the Lord had promised all the land of Canaan to the children of Israel. Each city had a king. Joshua made war a long time with all those kings, and finally he possessed all that land, the hills, and all the south country, and the valley, and the plain, and the mountains. There was but one city which made peace with the children

¹ Jericho = jěr'i-ko.

of Israel. It was Gibeon.¹ The kings that Joshua conquered were thirty and one.

When the kings of five confederate cities heard that Gibeon had made peace with the Israelites; they were exceedingly stirred and planned to make war on that city.

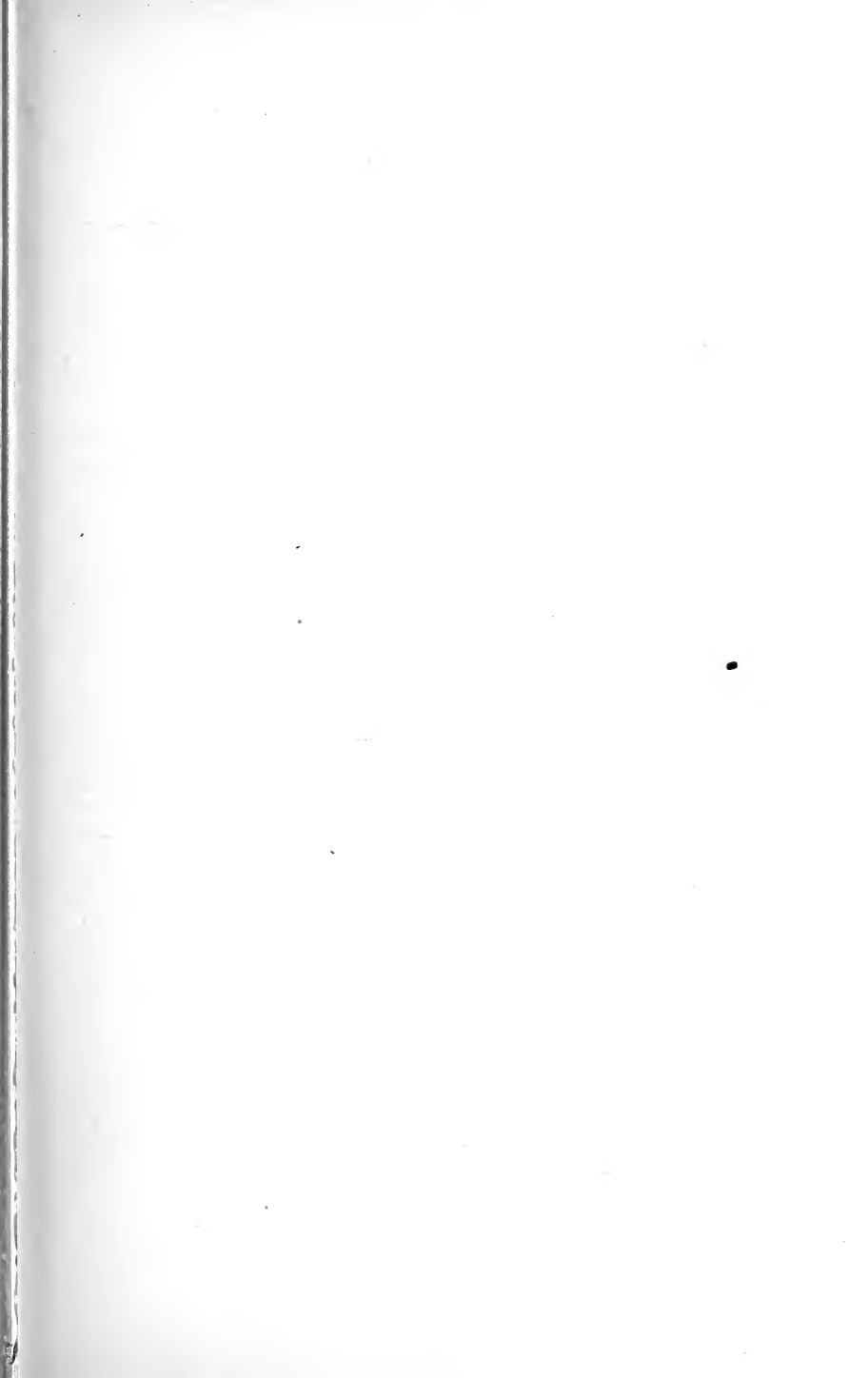
The men of Gibeon, not daring to trust to their own strength, sent to Joshua's camp at Gilgal² for him to come up quickly to help them against the enemy. Joshua lost no time. He assembled all his army, and, after marching all night, arrived in the early morning at the enemy's camp. So surprised were these five kings when they saw this formidable army that they were panic-stricken and soon routed, and as they were fleeing in all directions, a hail storm overtook them; and it came to pass that more died from hailstones than were slain by the sword.

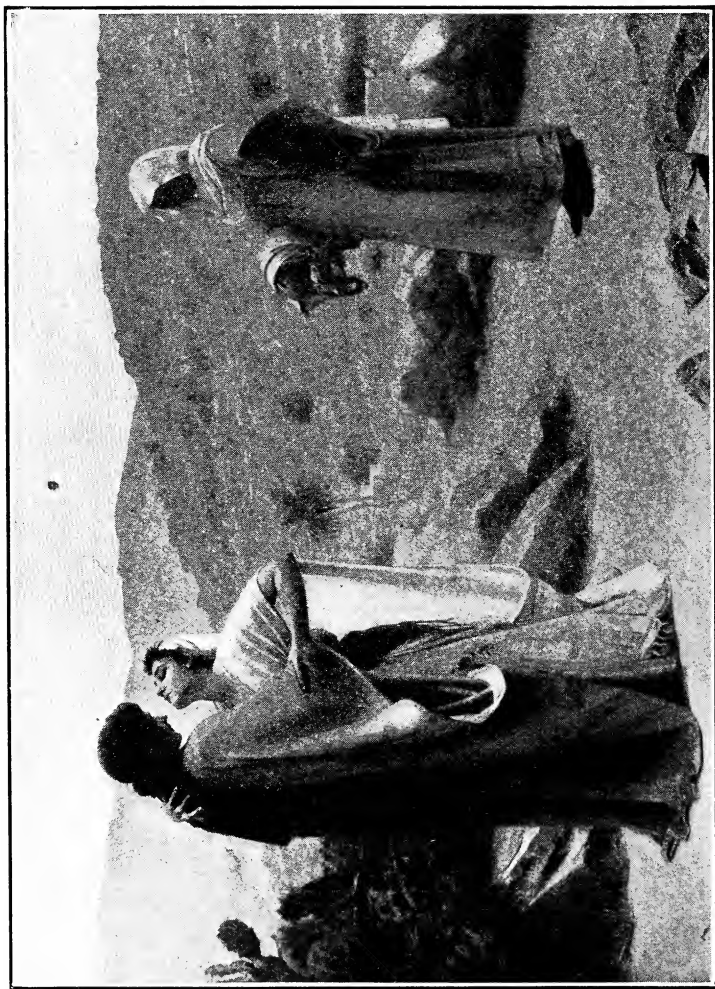
It was at this time that Joshua performed his most wonderful act. Before all the people, he asked God most fervently to grant what he asked: Then he said reverently, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou moon in the valley of Ajalon."³ And it is written that the sun stood still in the midst of the heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. And there was no day like that before it or after it.

¹ Gibeon = gīb'e-on.

² Gilgal = gīl'gāl.

³ Ajalon = āj'ā-lōn.





From the painting by Calderon

RUTH AND NAOMI

VI.—RUTH



RUTH and her mother-in-law, Naomi,¹ lived in the land of Moab. There was a famine in that land, and Naomi resolved to go back to her old home in Judah. Weeping she kissed Ruth and said good-by.

But Ruth turned to her saying, "Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return from following after thee ; for whither thou goest, I will go ; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge ; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God. The Lord do so to me and more also if aught but death part thee and me."

When Naomi became aware that Ruth loved her so dearly she took Ruth home with her to the land of Judah.

It was at the time of the barley harvest when the two arrived in Bethlehem.² Ruth went to the fields and asked permission to glean after the reapers. The field where she gleaned belonged to Boaz,³ a man of great possessions. Ruth picked up the barley that the reapers had left, and by night her gleanings amounted

¹ Naomi = na-ō' mī. ² Bethlehem = bēth'le-hem. ³ Boaz = bō'az.

to as much as an ephah. This was an ancient Hebrew dry measure, thought to be about eight and one half gallons. This she took home to Naomi.

Ruth was a dutiful daughter always. The people of Bethlehem said she was better to Naomi than seven sons. In time, Boaz took Ruth to be his wife.

But where thou goest, I will go ;
With thine my earthly lot is cast ;
In pain and pleasure, joy and woe
Will I attend thee to the last.

That hour shall find me by thy side
And where thy grave is mine shall be.
Death can but for a time divide
My firm and faithful heart from thee.

Examiner.

RUTH

She stood breast-high amid the corn
Clasped by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush
Deeply ripened; such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
Which were blackest none could tell.
But long lashes veiled a light
That had else been all too bright.

Sure, I said, heav'n did not mean,
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean.
Lay thy sheaf down and come,
Share my harvest and my home.

John Godfrey Saxe.

VII.—DEBORAH



THE children of Israel suffered many temptations. Sometimes they resisted bravely, and sometimes they did evil in the sight of the Lord. At one time, because of wrongdoing, they were sold to Jabin,¹ the king of Canaan. For twenty years he allowed Sisera,² the captain of his soldiers, to oppress the Israelites. This Sisera had nine hundred chariots of iron and a multitude of soldiers.

The Israelites at this time had a judge whose name was Deborah.³ She was also a prophetess. She dwelt under the Palm tree of Deborah, in Mount Ephraim,⁴ between Ramah⁵ and Bethel.⁶

One day she called Barak⁷ and told him to go with ten thousand men toward Mount Tabor where he should meet his enemy, Sisera, with his chariots and his multitude. She told him they should join in battle and that the victory should be to Barak, but that the glory of killing Sisera could not be his, for Sisera should fall by the hand of a woman.

¹ Jabin = jā'bin.

² Sisera = sīs'e-rā.

³ Deborah = dėb'o-rā.

⁴ Ephraim = ē'fra-īm.

⁵ Ramah = rā'mā.

⁶ Bethel = bēth'ēl.

⁷ Barak = bā'rak.

Barak obeyed Deborah, and it came to pass even as she had said. While Barak pursued the chariots, Sisera alighted from his and fled away to the tent of Jael,¹ the wife of Heber,² the Kenite.³ Sisera ran inside the tent and asked Jael for a drink of water. She gave him milk to drink, and when he lay down, for he was weary, she covered him with a mantle.

Then Jael took a nail and a hammer in her hand and went softly and smote the nail into his temple and fastened it into the ground. So he died. Then Jael went out to meet Barak and brought him to her tent and showed him Sisera with the nail in his temples.

In that way were the enemies of the Israelites subdued. Then Deborah and Barak sang unto the Lord this song :

“ Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel !

Hear, O ye kings ; give ear, O ye princes ;

I, even I, will sing unto the Lord !

Awake, awake, utter a song :

Arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive.

Zebulun⁴ and Naphtali⁵ were a people

That jeoparded their lives unto the death in the high
places of the field :

They fought from heaven ;

The stars in their course fought against Sisera.

O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength !

¹ Jael = jā'el.

² Heber = hē'ber.

³ Kenite = kē'nite.

⁴ Zebulun = zēb'u-lūn.

⁵ Naphtali = nāf'ta-lī.

Blessed above all women shall Jael, the wife of Heber,
the Kenite, be ;

Blessed shall she be above women in the tent.

At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down ;

Where he bowed, there he fell down dead.

So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord."

VIII.—GIDEON



THE Midianites were like grasshoppers for multitude, for both they and their camels were without number. They had ruled the Israelites for seven years. They had destroyed the sheep and the oxen of the Israelites and the increase of the earth. Because they so feared the Midi-

anites, the children of Israel had hidden themselves in caves in the mountains. But even here they were not safe, and at last they cried unto the Lord to help them.

Joash,¹ the Abi-ezrite,² had a son by the name of Gideon³ who was a mighty man of valor. An angel of the Lord appeared to him and said unto him, "The Lord is with thee."

Gideon said to the angel of the Lord, "If the Lord be with us, why, then, is all this befallen us; why has the Lord forsaken Israel?"

The angel comforted Gideon and declared that the Lord meant to save the Israelites through him.

Gideon said, "Wherewith shall I save Israel? My family is poor, and I am the least of my father's house."

¹ Joash = Jō'āsh. ² Abiezrite = ā'bī-ēz'rite. ³ Gideon = ġīd'e-on.

The Lord said unto him, "I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man."

Then Gideon asked several proofs. He put a fleece of wool on the floor and said if the next morning's dew was on the wool and all the earth around was dry, he would believe that Israel should be saved by his hand. The next morning he wrung out a bowl of water from the fleece, yet all the ground around was dry. He then asked that the fleece only be dry and that the dew be on all the earth around. And the next morning it was even as he had begged God to have it.

Then Gideon drew all the Israelites together to make war on the Midianites. Thirty-two thousand Israelites assembled. Men to the number of twenty-two thousand went home because they were afraid. God told Gideon to take all that remained down to the river and every one that lapped the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, should go with him to destroy the enemy. Those that bowed upon their knees to drink, Gideon sent back to their tents. Out of the ten thousand men there were three hundred that lapped.

That same night Gideon divided his three hundred men into three companies. He put into every man's hand a trumpet, an empty pitcher, and a lamp within the pitcher, and told them to do just as he did.

Gideon and his three companies came up to the camp of the Midianites. Every man stood in his place, and they blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers,

and held the lamps in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands, and cried all together, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Then the Midianites were full of fear and all the host of them fled; and Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over, he and the three hundred men that were with him, "faint, yet pursuing them."

The men of Israel asked Gideon to rule over them, him, and his son, and his son's son, because he had delivered them from the hand of Midian. But Gideon said unto them, "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: The Lord shall rule over you."

SUGGESTED READING :

The Picture Bible . . . *Ferdinand Freilegrath.*

IX.—JEPHTHAH



JEPHTHAH¹ was the son of Gilead.² He was thrust from home by his brothers, who disliked him, and he fled to the land of Tob, where he became a mighty man of valor.

It came to pass, in process of time, that the Ammonites made war against Israel. The Israelites had no man strong enough to lead them. Then the elders went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob, and said to him, "Come, be our captain, that we may fight the Ammonites."

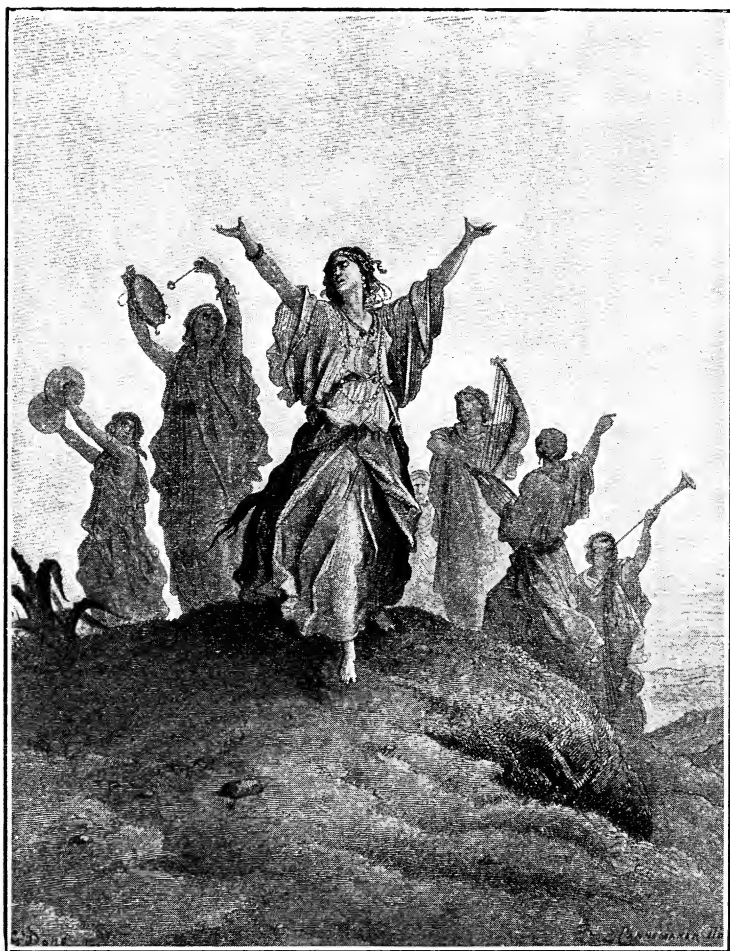
But Jephthah said to them, "Did ye not hate me, and expel me from my father's house? and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress?"

They made an agreement that he should be head and captain over them if he should be victorious over the Ammonites. Then Jephthah went with the elders and came to Mizpeh, in Gilead.

It was at Mizpeh that Jephthah vowed to the Lord in these words: "If thou wilt indeed deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be

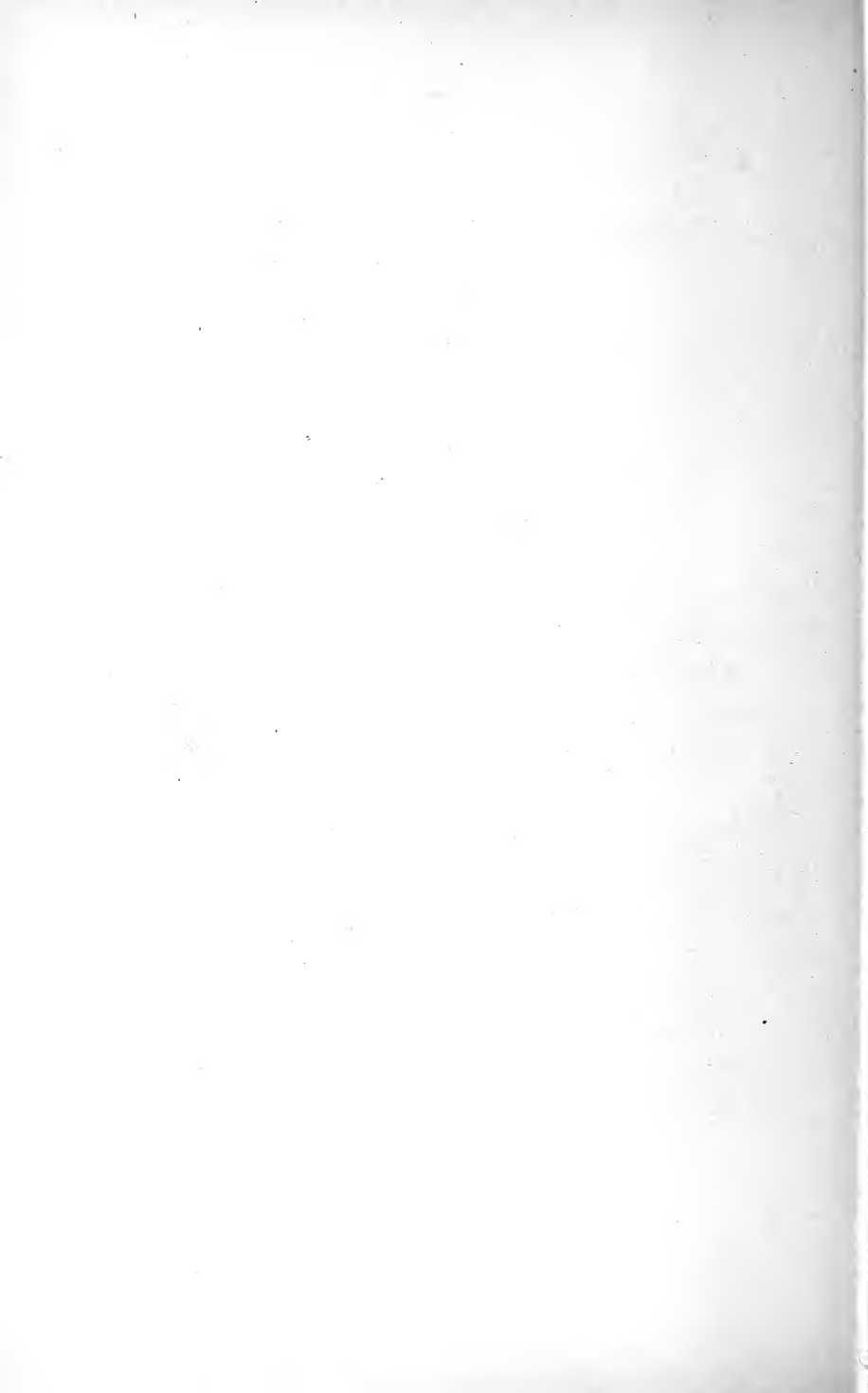
¹ Jephtha = jěf'tha.

² Gilead = gīl'e-ad.



Gustav Doré.

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER COMING TO MEET HER FATHER



that whatsoever cometh forth from the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the Ammonites, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering."

Jephthah was very successful in the battles he waged against the children of Ammon. He smote them with great slaughter, taking twenty cities and subduing them to the children of Israel.

And Jephthah came back to Mizpeh, his home, and behold his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances; and she was his only child; besides her he had neither son nor daughter. When he saw her he rent his clothes, and said, "Alas, my daughter, thou hast brought me very low; for I have spoken unto the Lord, and I cannot go back."

She comforted him by saying, "Do with me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth." At the end of two months Jephthah did with her according to the vow which he had vowed.

And it was a custom in Israel that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah, the Gileadite, four days in a year.

Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then he died and was buried in one of the cities of Gilead.

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER

THE mighty Jephthah led his warriors on
Through Mizpeh's streets. His helm was proudly set
And his stern lip curl'd slightly, as if praise
Were for the hero's scorn. His step was firm,
But free as India's leopard; and his mail
Whose shekels none in Israel might bear,
Was like a cedar's tassel on his frame.
His crest was Judah's kingliest; and the look
Of his dark lofty eye and bended brow,
Might quell a lion. He led on, but thoughts
Seem'd gathering round which troubled him. The
veins

Grew visible upon his swarthy brow.
And his proud lip was pressed as if in pain.
He trod less firmly, and his restless eye
Glanced forward frequently, as if some ill
He dared not meet were there. His home was near,
And men were thronging, with that strange delight
They have in human passions, to observe
The struggle of his feelings with his pride.
He gazed intently forward. The tall firs before his
door

Were motionless. The leaves
Of the sweet aloe, and the clustering vines

Which half concealed his threshold, met his eye
Unchanged and beautiful; and one by one,
The balsam, with its sweet distilling stems
And the Circassian rose, and all the crowd
Of silent and familiar things stole up
Like the recovered passages of dreams.
He rode on rapidly. A moment more
And he had reached his home; when lo! there
sprang

One with a bounding footstep, and a brow
Of light, to meet him. Oh, how beautiful!—
Her proud eye flashing like a sunlit gem—
And her luxuriant hair!—'twas like the sweep
Of a dark wing in visions. He stood still
As if the sight had withered him. She threw
Her arms about his neck—he heeded not.
She called him “Father”—but he answered not.
She stood and gazed upon him. Was he wroth?
There was no anger in that bloodshot eye.
Had sickness seized him? She unclasp'd his helm
And laid her white hand gently on his brow,
And the large veins felt stiff and hard, like cords.
The touch aroused him. He raised up his hands
And spoke the name of God in agony.
She knew that he was stricken, then; and rushed
Again into his arms; and, with a flood
Of tears she could not bridle, sobbed a prayer
That he would breathe his agony in words.

He told her—and a momentary flush
Shot o'er her countenance; and then the soul
Of Jephthah's daughter waken'd; and she stood
Calmly and nobly up, and said 'twas well—
And she would die.

N. P. Willis.

SUGGESTED READINGS :

Dream of Fair Women	.	.	.	<i>Alfred Tennyson.</i>
Jephthah's Daughter	.	.	.	<i>Lord Byron.</i>

X.—SAMSON



SAMSON¹ was a Nazarite,² which means a person consecrated to God. A Nazarite wore his hair unshorn as a sign that he was dedicated to God. As a child Samson manifested extraordinary physical powers and occasionally great spiritual power. As a man he judged Israel twenty years.

Once he was passing the vineyards of Timnath³ when a young lion roared against him. Samson caught him and rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand. After a while, as he was passing the same place he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion, and there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion. Then he made a riddle which he asked of thirty gay companions. He said, "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." But they could not in three days expound the riddle.

Once Samson was wronged by the Philistines.⁴ To avenge himself he caught three hundred foxes and

¹ Samson = sām'son.

² Nazarite = nāz'a-rīte.

³ Timnath = tīm'nath.

⁴ Philistines = phī-līs'tīnes.

turned them tail to tail and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails, and when he had set the brands on fire, he turned the foxes loose into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up the corn and the vineyards and the olives.

Once when he was leaving the city of Gaza¹ he took the doors of the gate of the city and the two posts, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of the hill that is before Hebron.

Once he was bound with seven green withes which had not been dried, but he broke them as fire breaks threads of tow. Once he was bound with new ropes, but he broke them off his arms like thread.

Finally he confided to one who was dear to him that his great strength lay in his hair; that should it be shaven he would become weak like other men. This false friend told the Philistines, who, when Samson slept, shaved the locks of his head. When he awoke out of his sleep his strength was departed from him. And the Philistines took him and put out his eyes and brought him to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he sorrowed in the prison-house. But the hair of his head grew out again.

Then the Philistines, thinking Samson safe in their power, made merry. There were three thousand men and women making merry over his capture. They called for the blind Samson out of the prison-house to

¹ Gaza = gā'zā.

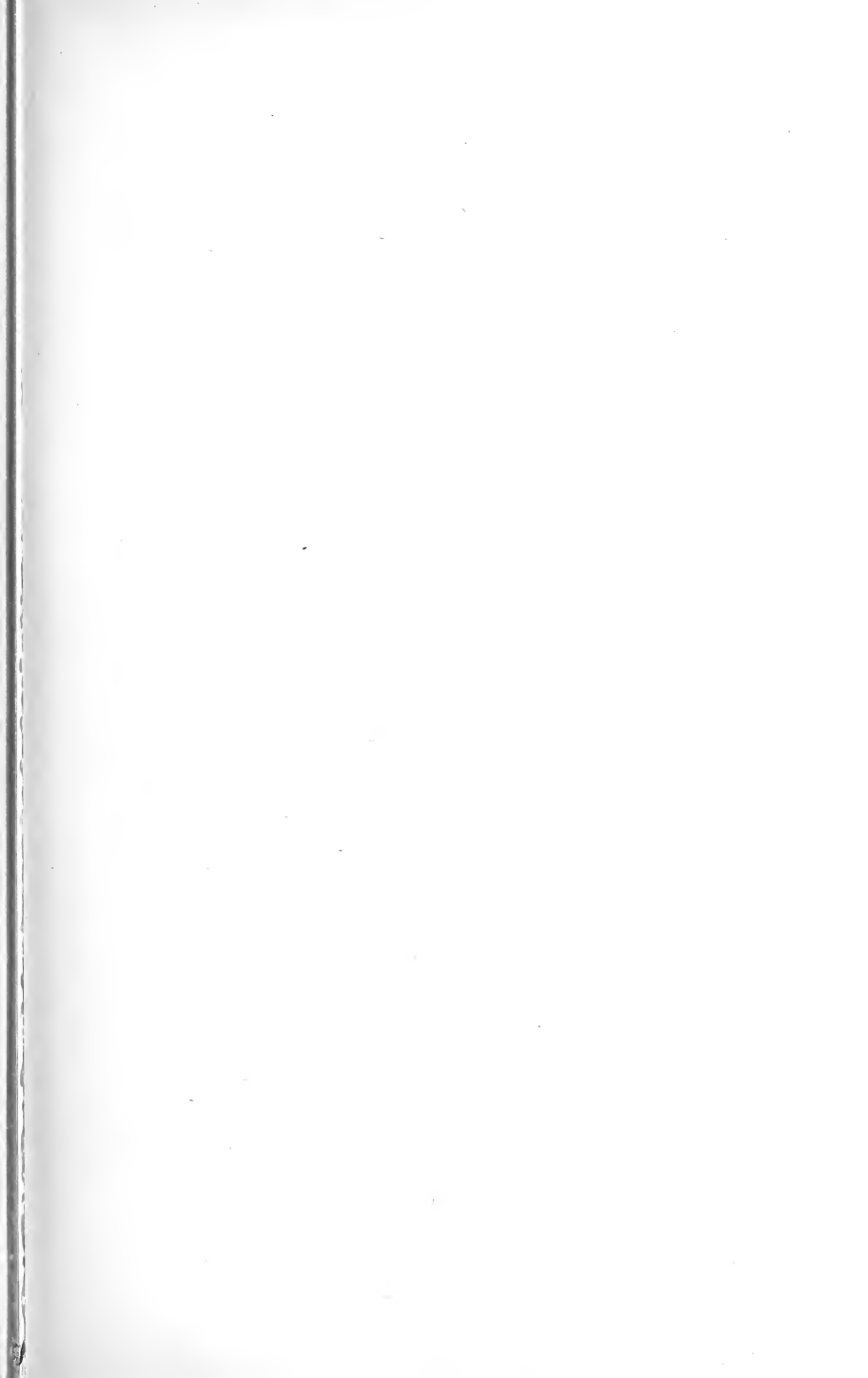
make sport for them, and they set him between the pillars. Samson said to the boy who led him, "Suffer me to feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them."

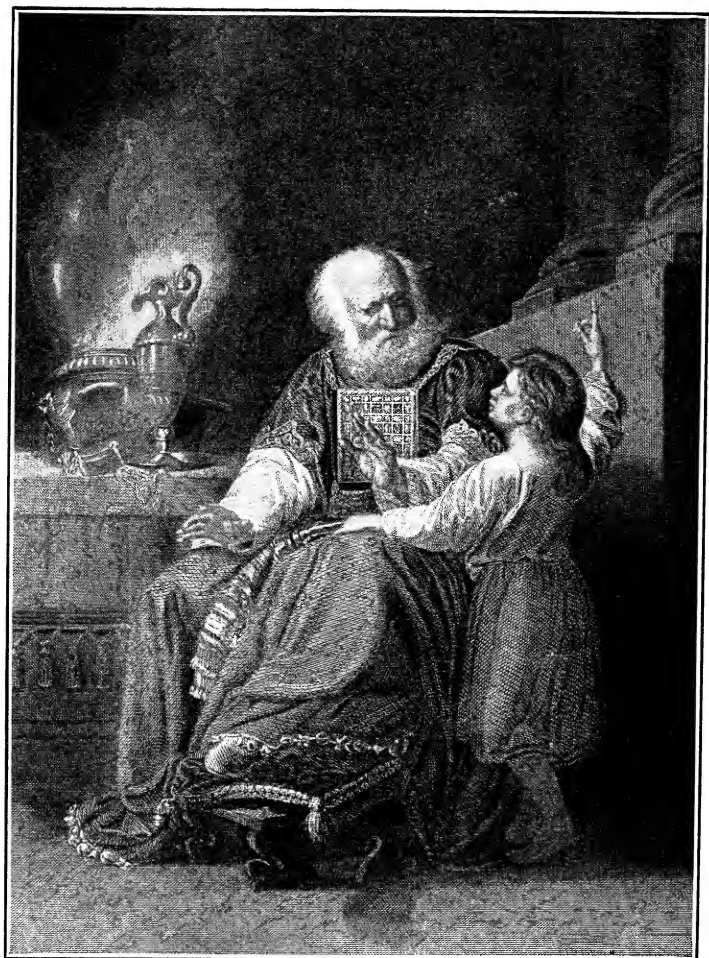
Samson called upon the Lord and said, "Strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, that I may at once be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." Then, taking hold of the two middle pillars on which the house was borne up, the one with his right hand, the other with his left, and saying, "Let me die with the Philistines," he bowed himself with all his might, and the house fell upon the lords and all the people therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

SAMSON

O WHEREFORE was my birth from heaven foretold
Twice by an angel, who at last, in sight
Of both my parents, all in flames ascended
From off the altar, where an offering burned,
As in a fiery column charioting
His God-like presence,—
Why was my breeding ordered and prescribed
As of a person separate to God,
Destined for great exploits; if I must die
Betrayed, captived, and both my eyes put out,
Made of mine enemies the scorn and gaze:
To grind in brazen fetters under task
With this heaven-gifted strength? O glorious strength
Put to the labor of a beast, debased
Lower than bond-slave! Promise was, that I
Should Israel from Philistines' yoke deliver:
Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him
Eyeless in Gaza, at the mill with slaves,
Himself in bonds under Philistine yoke.

—From *Milton's* "Samson Agonistes."

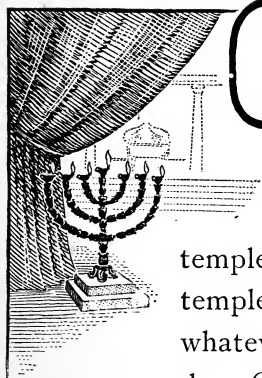




From the painting by Copley

SAMUEL BEFORE ELI

XI.—SAMUEL



ONCE a mother whose name was Hannah took her little one-year-old baby boy, Samuel, to the temple and gave him to Eli,¹ the High Priest, who was to teach him to serve in the temple. He was to open the doors of the temple, trim the sacred lamps, and do whatever the High Priest wished him to do. On the day that he was consecrated, it is written that he worshiped God.

Every year when the mother came up to offer the yearly sacrifice, she brought Samuel a little coat. She did this because she loved him. He could not go home to Ramah where his brothers and sisters were, for she had given him to be a prophet of the Lord. Samuel grew and was in favor with the Lord and with men.

One night when Samuel was quite a boy, he heard his name called, and ran to Eli, saying, "Here am I." But Eli told him to lie down again, for he had not called him. Then again Samuel heard some one call, "Samuel," and again he ran to Eli, saying, "Here am I."

¹ Eli = ē'li.

But Eli told him he had not called him. But Samuel heard the voice again and Eli told him it must be the Lord speaking to him, and if he should hear it again to say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

It was only a few minutes before the young man heard some one say, "Samuel, Samuel!"

Then he said, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

The Lord talked to Samuel and told him what to do. Samuel always obeyed the Lord; and every one, from Dan even to Beersheba,¹ knew that the Lord loved Samuel.

In after years Samuel judged Israel. For fifty years he was their judge, twelve years alone, and thirty-eight years jointly with Saul. He never defrauded nor oppressed any one, but prayed for Israel all the days of his life. He went from year to year in circuit to Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpeh, and then to his home, Ramah.

It was at Ramah that he built an altar to Jehovah; and it was in the garden of his house at Ramah that Samuel was buried.

By cool Siloam's² shady rill
How sweet the lily grows!
How sweet the breath beneath the hill,
Of Sharon's³ dewy rose!

¹ Beersheba = bē'er-shē'bā.

² Siloam = sī-lō'am.

³ Sharon = shâr'on.

Lo, such the child whose early feet
The paths of peace have trod;
Whose secret heart with influence sweet
Is upward drawn to God.

R. Heber

XII.—SAUL



THE children of Israel seemed always to need a leader. Perhaps this was because they nearly always had a war on hand. Samuel, their judge, had subdued their ancient enemy, the Philistines, and had won back all the cities that the Philistines had taken, and had so wisely judged Israel that for a long time there was peace.

Samuel had two sons, and in time he made them judges of Israel. These sons were not like their father, but they loved money, took bribes and rendered unjust decisions. These and other reasons led the elders of Israel to go to Samuel and beg him to give them a king such as other nations had to judge them.

Samuel tried to reason with them that they already had a king, even the Lord, who is King of Kings, and that an earthly king would very likely double their troubles. But they refused to listen and demanded a king so that they might be like other nations, and have a king to judge them, and to fight their battles.

Samuel, being a prophet as well as a judge, knew whom to select for their king. He took Saul, whose

family was one of the least of the tribe of Benjamin, which tribe was one of the smallest of the tribes of Israel. But even though he came of a somewhat obscure family Saul himself was a choice young man. There was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person ; from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people.

Samuel anointed Saul with oil and told him that the spirit of prophecy should come upon him, and that he should be turned into another man. This happened just as Samuel had said, for Saul's heart was changed.

Later, Samuel called all the tribes of Israel together to elect their king, saying to them, " See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people ;" and the people shouted, " God save the king." But the children of Belial¹ said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents. But Saul held his peace.

Very soon after this Saul gained a great victory over the Ammonites. These Ammonites marched into one of Saul's cities, and threatened to put out the right eye of every man there. The people asked seven-days' grace. This was given them. During these days they sent Saul word of their distress. Saul, like the dauntless hero he was, summoned and lead an army three hundred thousand strong, and, by marching all night, arrived on the seventh morning and overthrew the Ammonites

¹ Belial = bē'li-al.

with terrible slaughter. This so delighted the Israelites that they renewed their allegiance to Saul as king. Then followed victories over Moab, and Edom, and Zebah,¹ and the Philistines, and the Amalekites.²

Saul had reason to remember the Amalekites always. The Lord told Saul when he fought with them to destroy them and all they had, utterly. But Saul allowed his army to spare the best of the sheep and oxen and fatlings, and take them as spoil. He said he did this because he feared the opinion of his people. For this disobedience Saul paid the price of his kingdom. From this time began his downfall. Yet he was great even in his fall. Although malice, and envy, and jealousy, took up their abode in his heart, he frequently would have seasons of deep remorse. While Saul loved God in a far-off way, he could not see that he should yield God strict obedience.

Saul felt much bitterness toward David, who, as a youth, had rendered great service to him and had been appointed to succeed him as king of Israel. David was innocent of all malice toward Saul; yet Saul pursued him for years and tried to hunt him to death. Twice during this unhappy time David had Saul in his power and might have taken his life, but he would not harm the Lord's anointed. Saul recognized and admired the nobility of David, and once lifted up his voice and wept, and said to David, "Thou art more righteous

¹ Zebah = zē'bah.

² Amalekites = ām'a-lek-ītes.

than I; for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil."

At another time Saul said, "I have sinned; return, David; for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day; behold, I have played the fool and have erred exceedingly. Blessed be thou, my son, David; thou shalt both do great things and also shalt still prevail." After this Saul sought David's life no more.

Saul's last battle was fought with the Philistines, but in this battle he did not conquer. The men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa, and the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him and wounded him. Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw thy sword and thrust me through therewith." But his armor-bearer would not, for he was afraid. Then Saul took a sword and fell upon it. His armor-bearer fell likewise upon his sword and died with him.

So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armor-bearer, and all his men, that same day together.

Saul reigned forty years. He had splendid virtues and conspicuous faults.

SAUL

. . . . Look forth o'er the years!
Thou hast done now with eyes for the actual; begin
 with the seer's!
Is Saul dead? In the depth of the vale make his tomb
 —bid arise
A gray mountain of marble heaped four-square, till,
 built to the skies,
Let it mark where the great First King slumbers:
 whose fame would ye know?
Up above see the rock's naked face, where the record
 shall go
In great characters cut by the scribe,—Such was Saul,
 so he did;
With the sages directing the work, by the populace
 chid,—
For not half, they'll affirm, is comprised there! Which
 fault to amend,
In the grove with his kind grows the cedar, whereon
 they shall spend
(See, in tablets 'tis level before them) their praise, and
 record
With the gold of the graver, Saul's story—the states-
 man's great word
Side by side with the poet's sweet comment. The
 river's a-wave

With smooth paper-reeds grazing each other when
prophet-winds rave :

So the pen gives unborn generations their due and
their part

In thy being ! Then, first of the mighty, thank God
that thou art !

Robert Browning.

SUGGESTED READINGS :

Saul *Byron.*

Song of Saul Before His Last Battle *Byron.*

XIII.—“THE SWEET SINGER OF ISRAEL”



JESSE,¹ the Bethlehemite, had eight sons. Of these the youngest was David. He kept his father's sheep. He was ruddy and of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon.

This youngest son had been chosen of God to be king of Israel in place of the reigning king, Saul, when the proper time should come, and had been anointed with oil by Samuel, after which ceremony David manifested much grace of character.

Just at this time Saul, the king of Israel, was much worried over the affair of his kingdom. His friends thought he would regain his peace of mind if he could hear music. At least it might soothe him into dreamless slumber. They told him that David was cunning in playing, prudent, comely in person, and that the Lord was with him. On this good recommendation Saul sent for David, who, finding favor in Saul's sight, became for a time his armor-bearer.

Every time Saul had a spell of despondency, David played for him upon the harp and sang, until the

¹ Jesse = jēs'se.

king was lifted out of his sorrow. In time David's music seemed to restore the king to perfect health and his old-time cheerfulness. When no longer needed, David returned to watch his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

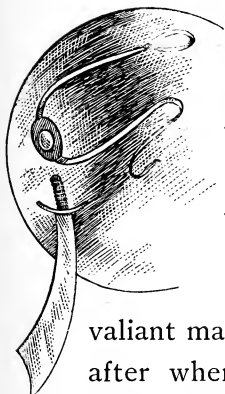
“THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL SWEPT”

THE harp the monarch minstrel swept,
The king of men, the loved of heaven,
Which music hallowed while she wept
O'er tones her heart of hearts had given.
Redoubled be her tears, its chords are riven!
It softened men of iron mould,
It gave them virtues not their own;
No ear so dull, no soul so cold,
That felt not, fired not to the tone,
Till David's lyre grew mightier than his throne.
It told the triumphs of our king,
It wafted glory to our God.
It made our gladden'd valleys ring,
The cedars bow, the mountains nod;
Its sound aspired to heaven, and there abode.
Since then, though heard on earth no more,
Devotion, and her daughter, Love,
Still bid the bursting spirit soar
To sounds that seem so far above,
In dreams that day's broad light cannot remove.
Lord Byron.

SUGGESTED READING :

Saul *Robert Browning.*

XIV.—GOLIATH OF GATH



IT was a very great honor to restore the health of the king, but David was soon to have the greater glory of saving the king and all his household and his people from being destroyed by a powerful foe.

David was more than a sweet player upon the harp. He was a valiant man of war. This was proven not long after when the Philistines gathered a mighty army to make war against the Israelites.

Saul and the men of Israel gathered their army together and set the battle in array against the enemy. Each army took its position on the side of a hill, with the valley of Elah¹ between them.

The advantage seemed to be on the side of the Philistines, for from their camp came forward a champion named Goliath,² of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.

This giant had upon his head a helmet of brass, and wore a brass coat of mail, whose weight was five thousand shekels. His legs were encased in brass, and be-

¹ Elah = ē'lah.

² Goliath = gō-li'ath.

tween his shoulders was a target of brass. He carried a formidable spear of such weight that ten ordinary men could not lift it, and one bearing a shield went before him.

Goliath stood and defied the Israelites. He called for a man to come out of Saul's army to fight him single-handed, saying, "If he be able to fight with me and to kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants and serve us."

This dreadful man came forward with these words every morning and every evening for forty days.

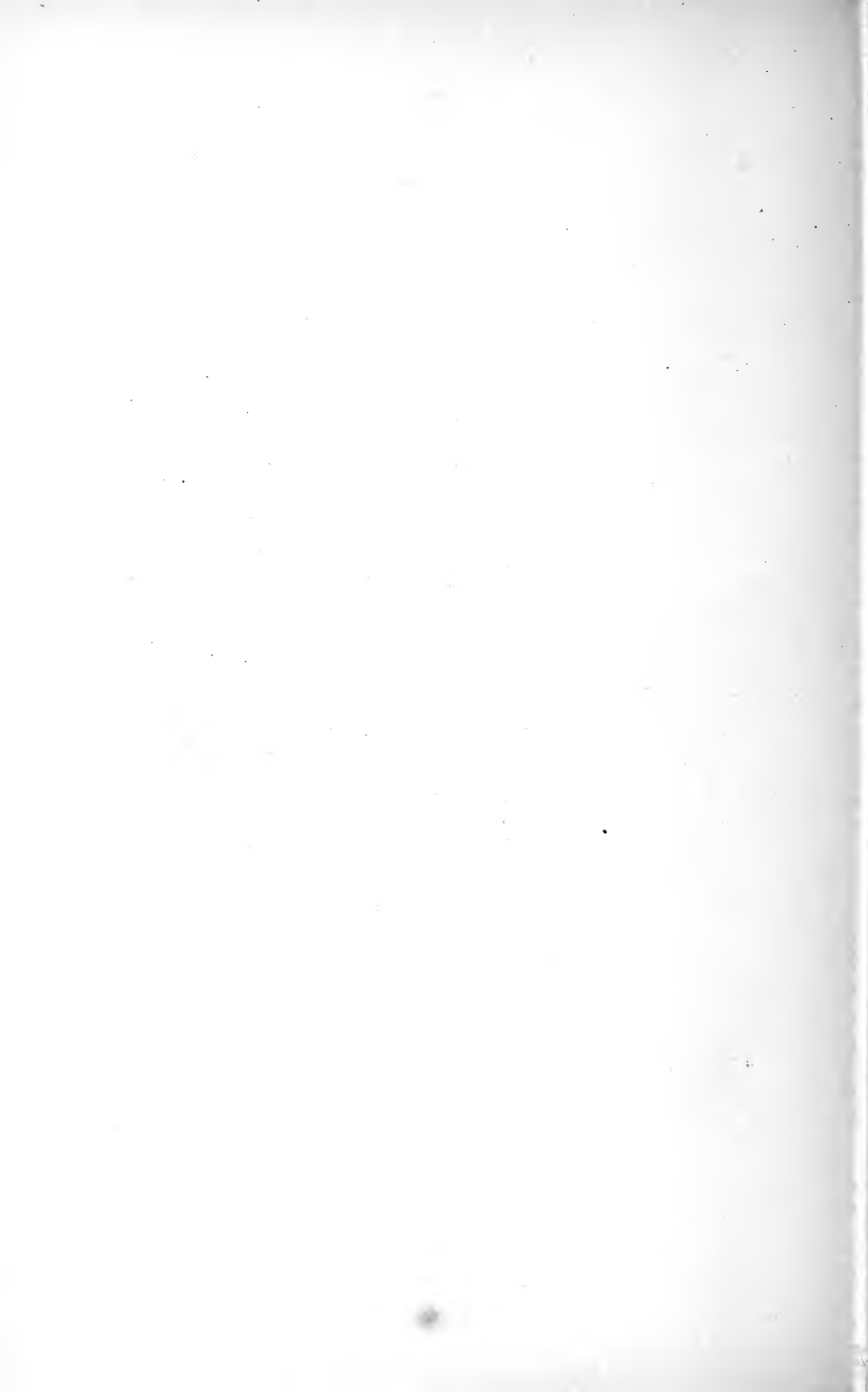
Saul and all Israel were dismayed when they saw the man, and they were sore afraid that they could not find any one willing to fight with him. They offered great riches and high honors to any man who would kill Goliath.

David had three brothers in Saul's army. One day his father, Jesse, sent young David to the camp to carry food to his brothers and to see how things were going. As he was talking with his brothers the giant of Gath came forward again with his challenge. David felt sure that he could kill Goliath. He said as much to the men as he walked around among them. His eldest brother scolded him for his pride, but some one reported to Saul what David had said, and Saul sent for him. David assured Saul that he could fight this Philistine. For proof he said, "Thy servant kept his



Gustav Doré

DAVID AND GOLIATH



father's sheep and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went after him and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and slew him. I slew both the lion and the bear; and this Philistine shall be as one of them. The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion and of the bear will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine."

Then Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with thee." Saul dressed David in his own armor and helmet and sword, but they were so heavy that David could not move, and he took them off.

David took his staff in his hand and chose five small stones out of the brook and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had. His sling was in his hand, and thus armed he drew near the Philistine.

When Goliath saw David he disdained him because he was only a youth, saying, "Am I a dog that thou comest to me with staves? Come to me and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the field."

David answered, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the God of the armies of Israel whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee unto my hand, and all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the

battle is the Lord's and he will give you unto our hands."

As the Philistine drew nigh, David put his hand in his bag and took thence a stone, and slung it and smote the Philistine in his forehead, who fell upon his face to the earth.

So David prevailed over Goliath with a sling and a stone, but there was no sword in the hand of David. Then David ran and taking Goliath's sword, cut off his head therewith.

When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled, pursued by the men of Israel and of Judah.¹

When David returned from the slaughter of Goliath he was brought before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. And Saul took him that day and would let him go no more home to his father's house.

This is one of David's songs of rejoicing:

The Lord is my rock, and my fortress and my deliverer.

I will call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

In my distress I called upon the Lord and cried to my God; and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.

He sent from above, he took me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy and from them that hated me; for they were too strong for me.

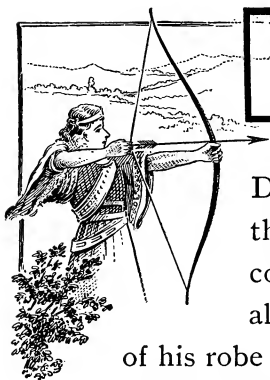
¹Judah = jū'dah.

For thou art my Lamp, O Lord ; and the Lord will lighten my darkness.

God is my strength and power ; and he maketh my way perfect.

2 SAMUEL, XXII.

XV.—DAVID AND JONATHAN



DAVID now became a member of Saul's family. Saul had a son named Jonáthan,¹ whose soul was knit with the soul of David as soon as he saw him. Jonathan loved David and they made a covenant together to love each other always. Jonathan stripped himself of his robe and his sword and his bow and his girdle and gave them to David.

And it came to pass that Saul grew angry with David because when the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing to meet King Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music, as they played they sang: "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." This saying displeased Saul. It made him jealous and fearful that David would supplant him in the kingdom. From that time on he sought David's life to slay him.

Jonathan still loved David as he loved his own soul, and he saved his life from the wrath of Saul many times. Once when Saul was very angry, Jonathan told David to hide behind a stone while he tried to pacify

¹ Jonathan = Jõn'a-than.

his father. He told David that if he could make peace between them he would come out to the field and shoot three arrows, and send a little lad after them. He told David to listen to what he told the lad. If he said, "Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, take them," David was to know that Jonathan had made peace between him and Saul; but if he said to the lad, "Behold, the arrows are beyond; go thy way," then David was to flee for his life.

The next morning, Jonathan, full of grief for David, went out to the field and shot the arrows. He said to the little lad, "Behold, the arrows are beyond thee; go thy way." David heard, and after the little lad was gone, came out from his hiding place. David and Jonathan kissed one another and wept with one another; but David wept the most. Then Jonathan said, "Go in peace. The Lord be between thee and me and between thy seed and my seed forever." David arose and departed.

About a year after this David was in the wilderness of Ziph,¹ in a wood, when he heard that Saul was come to seek his life. And Jonathan went to David, saying, "Fear not, for the hand of Saul shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee." And they made a covenant again.

Four years after this Saul and his sons were killed in battle with the Philistines. When David heard of this,

¹ Ziph = זיף.

he mourned and wept and fasted for Saul and Jonathan. David was made king of Israel and was a mighty man of war. But he never forgot his love for Jonathan nor the covenant they made before the Lord. He sent and found Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth,¹ and showed kindness to him always. Mephibosheth was lame in both feet. His nurse had dropped him when he was a young child. David gave him great riches, and many servants. He had him live in Jerusalem with him, and he did eat at the king's table.

David lamented over Jonathan and Saul thus :

The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places :

How are the mighty fallen !

Tell it not in Gath,

Publish it not in the streets of Askelon ;

Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

Ye mountains of Gilboa,

Let there be no dew,

Neither rain upon you, nor fields of offerings :

For there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away,

The shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil.

From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty,

The bow of Jonathan turned not back,

The sword of Saul returned not empty.

Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives,

And in their death they were not divided :

¹ Mephibosheth = me-fib'o-shēth.

They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.
Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet with other delights ;
Who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel.
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle !
O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thy high places.
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan :
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me ;
Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished !

2 SAMUEL I, 19-27.

SUGGESTED READING :

David's Lamentation *Mrs. J. H. Scott.*

XVI.—RIZPAH



THE Amorites were a tribe of Canaanites. They were at one time a powerful tribe, but their power was broken by the victory of the Israelites, led by Joshua. Afterwards they paid tribute to the Israelites, who had sworn unto them to protect them. But Saul forgot this promise, and once, in his zeal for the children of Israel, slew the Gibeonites, who were the remnant of the Amorites.

After Saul's reign, David became king. In the thirty-fourth year of his reign there was a great famine lasting for three years. David inquired of the Lord why the famine wasted the land. The Lord told him it was on account of Saul, and his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.

David wishing to end the famine, asked the Gibeonites what he should do for them to atone for the sin of Saul.

The Gibeonites answered him that they wished no silver or gold, but they wished seven of Saul's sons that they might hang them up unto the Lord in Gibeah.

David said he would give them seven sons of Saul. Then David took two sons of Rizpah,¹ the wife of Saul, and five sons of Michal,² the eldest daughter of Saul,—the five were Saul's grandsons,—and delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites and they hanged them in the hill before the Lord. They fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest.

This was a greivous blow to the mother heart of Rizpah. She took sackcloth and spread it upon the rock over the bodies of her sons, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night. When it was told to King David what Rizpah had done, he was filled with compassion. He gathered the bones of them that were hanged, and performed funeral rites over them and buried them. Then the famine ceased in that land.

¹ Rizpah = rīz'pah.

² Michal = mī'kal.

RIZPAH

HEAR what the desolate Rizpah said,
As on Gibeah's¹ rocks she watched the dead.
The sons of Michal before her lay,
And her own fair children, dearer than they:
By a death of shame they had all died,
And were stretched on the bare rock, side by
side.

And Rizpah, once the loveliest of them all
That bloomed and smiled in the court of Saul,
All wasted with watching and famine now,
And scorched by the sun her haggard brow,
Sat, mournfully guarding their corpses there,
And murmured a strange and solemn air:
The low, heart-broken and wailing strain
Of a mother that mourns her children slain.

I have made the crags my home, and spread
On their desert backs my sackcloth bed;
I have eaten the bitter herb of the rocks,
And drunk the midnight dew in my locks;
I have wept till I could not weep, and the pain
Of my burning eyeballs went to my brain.

¹ Gibeah = g'ib'e-ah.

Seven blackened corpses before me lie
In the blaze of the sun and the winds of the
sky.

I have watched them through the burning day,
And driven the vulture and raven away;
And the cormorant wheeled in circles round,
Yet feared to alight on the guarded ground;
And, when the shadows of twilight came,
I have seen the hyena's eyes of flame,
And heard at my side his stealthy tread,
But aye at my shout the savage fled;
And I threw the lighted brand, to fright
The jackal and wolf that yelled in the night.

Ye were foully murdered, my hapless sons,
By the hands of wicked and cruel ones;
Ye fell, in your fresh and blooming prime,
All innocent, for your father's crime.
He sinned—but he paid the price of his guilt
When his blood by a nameless hand was spilt;
When he strove with the heathen host in vain,
And fell with the flower of his people slain;
And the sceptre his children's hands should sway
From his injured lineage passed away.

But I had hoped that the cottage roof would be
A safe retreat for my sons and me;

And that while they ripened to manhood fast,
They should wean my thoughts from the woes of
the past.

And my bosom swelled with a mother's pride,
As they stood in their beauty and strength by my
side.

Tall, like their sire, with the princely grace
Of his stately form and the bloom of his face.
Oh, what an hour for a mother's heart,
When the pitiless ruffians tore us apart!
When I clasped their knees and wept and prayed,
And struggled and shrieked to Heaven for aid,
And clung to my sons with desperate strength,
Till the murderers loosed my hold at length,
And bore me breathless and faint aside,
In their iron arms, while my children died.
They died—and the mother that gave them birth
Is forbid to cover their bones with earth.

The barley harvest was nodding white
When my children died on the rocky height,
And the reapers were singing on hill and plain
When I came to my task of sorrow and pain.
But now the season of rain is nigh,
The sun is dim in the thickening sky,
And the clouds in sullen darkness rest
Where he hides his light at the doors of the
west.

I hear the howl of the wind that brings
The long, drear storm on its heavy wings;
But the howling wind and the driving rain
Will beat on my houseless head in vain:
I shall stay, from my murdered sons to scare
The beasts of the desert and fowls of air.

W. C. Bryant.

XVII.—ABSALOM



DAVID had many sons, but he seemed to love Absalom, his third son, most dearly. Absalom's mother was the daughter of the king of Geshur.² Her name was Maacah.³

Once, for a very grave fault, Absalom fled from Jerusalem to Geshur, and was there three years. His father, King David, mourned for him every day, and he longed to go forth unto him. Finally, the king sent for him to come back. Absalom returned, but did not see his father's face for two years. Then he bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king, and David kissed Absalom and forgave him.

In all Israel there was none so much praised as Absalom for his beauty. From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.

Absalom, by fair speeches and courtesies, stole the hearts of the men of Israel. Then he conspired to take the throne from his father David, and reign in

¹ Absalom = ăb'sa-lom.

² Geshur = ġē'shur.

³ Maacah = mā'a-kah.



Gustav Doré

DAVID MOURNING FOR ABSALOM



his stead. He fled to Hebron,¹ and many people went with him.

When this treachery was told to David he fled from Jerusalem, and many people, valiant and true, with him, and they tarried in a place that was far off. Friends aided David. They brought beds, and basins, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentils, and parched pulse, and honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese; for they said, "The people is hungry, weary, and thirsty in the wilderness."

In time Absalom and his followers joined battle against David. The battle was in the wood of Ephraim. Twenty thousand men were slaughtered in one day. As each captain went out to the battle, King David said to him, "Deal gently, for my sake, with the young man, even with Absalom," for he loved him still.

Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and Absalom's head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away. A certain man saw him, but would not, as he said, for a thousand shekels of silver, put forth his hand against the king's son, for he had heard David say, "Beware that none touch the young man, Absalom." But Joab, the king's great

¹ Hebron = hē'bron.

captain, took three darts in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while he was yet alive. The soldier then took Absalom and cast him into a great pit in the wood and laid a very great heap of stones upon him. All the followers of Absalom quickly fled, every one to his tent.

When the king heard how Absalom's life had gone out he was much moved. He went up to the chamber over the gate and wept ; and as he went thus he said, "O my son Absalom ! my son ! my son ! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son !"

And the victory that day was turned into mourning when the people learned how the king was grieved for his son.

ABSALOM

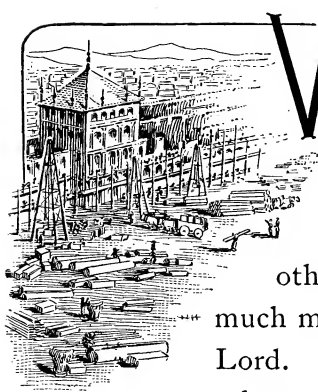
“ALAS, my noble boy! that thou should'st die!
Thou who wert so beautifully fair!
That death should settle in thy glorious eye
And leave his stillness in this clustering hair!
How could he mark thee for the silent tomb!
My proud boy, Absalom!

“And oh! when I am stricken, and my heart,
Like a bruised reed, is waiting to be broken,
How will its love for thee, as I depart,
Yearn for thine ear to drink its last deep token!
It were so sweet, amid death's gathering gloom,
To see thee, Absalom!

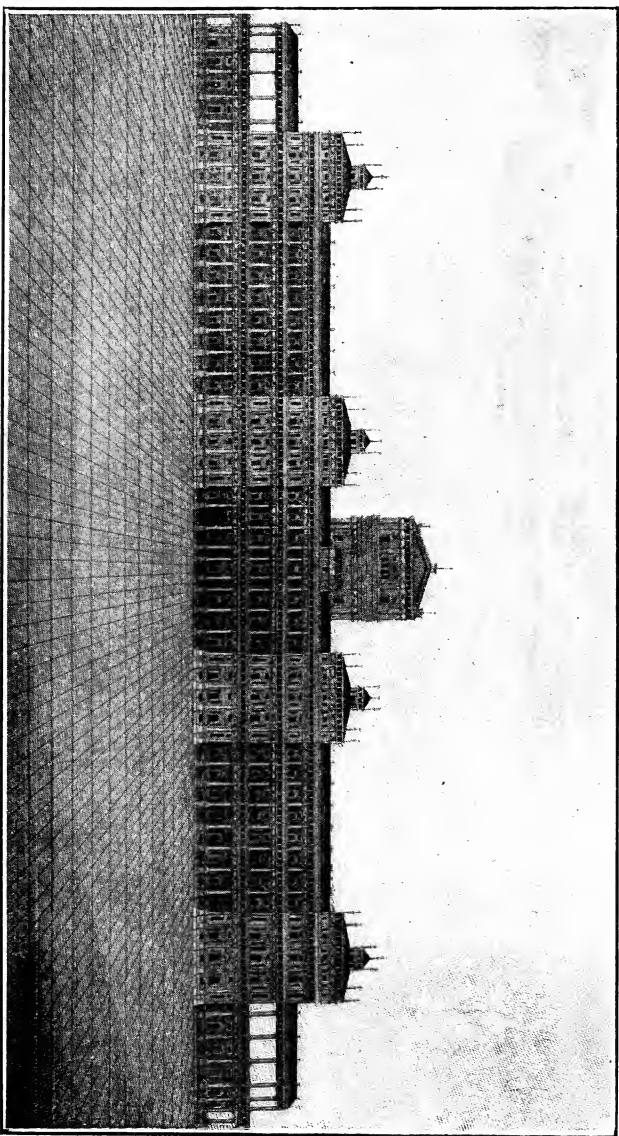
“And now, farewell! 'Tis hard to give thee up,
With death so like a gentle slumber on thee;
And thy dark sin!—Oh! I could drink the cup,
If from this woe its bitterness had won thee.
May God have called thee, like a wanderer, home,
My lost boy, Absalom!”

N. P. Willis.

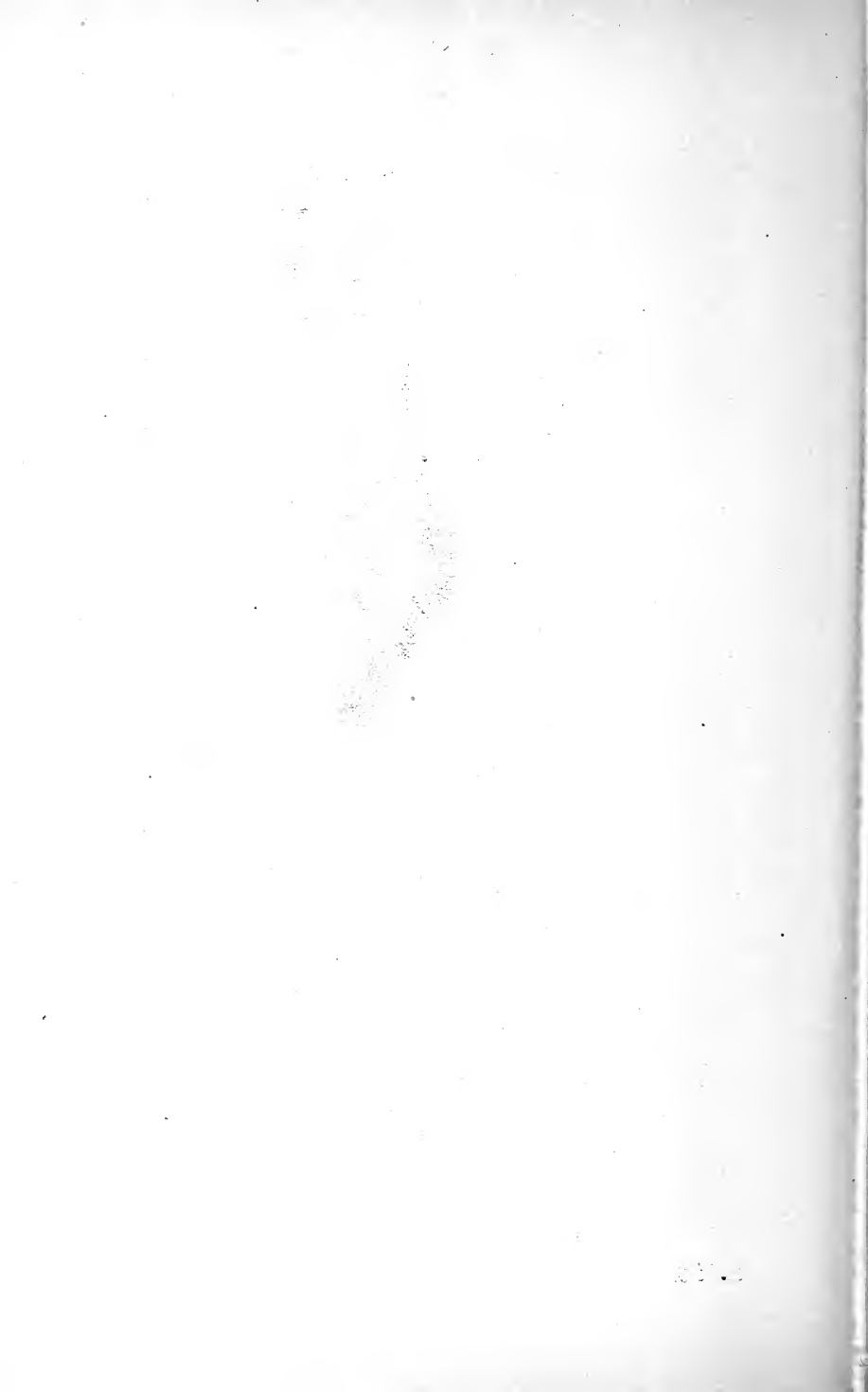
XVIII.—SOLOMON



WHEN David was full of days he made Solomon, his son, king of Israel. David had been a man of war, yet during the years that he was warring with other nations he had prepared much material to build a temple to the Lord. He had an hundred thousand talents of gold, a thousand thousand talents of silver, brass and iron without weight, timber also, and stone in abundance. These he gave to Solomon and told him to begin the temple. He told Solomon to be strong and of good courage, and do it. Then he gave him the pattern of the porch, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers, and of the inner parlors, and of the place of the mercy seat. He gave of gold by weight for the candlesticks of gold, and for the lamps of gold, and for the tables of shew-bread; and pure gold for the flesh-hooks, and for the golden basins. He gave refined gold by weight for the altar of incense, and for the chariot of the cherubim, that spread out their wings and covered the ark of the covenant of the Lord.



SOLOMON'S TEMPLE



He prepared gold for the things to be made of gold, and silver for the things to be made of silver, and brass for the things of brass, and iron for the things of iron, and wood for the things of wood; also onyx-stones and all manner of precious stones and marble in great abundance. Of the gold of Ophir¹ he gave three thousand talents, and seven thousand talents of refined silver to overlay the walls of the temple. All this did David give to Solomon, who began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah² in the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign.

Solomon employed seventy thousand men to bear burdens, and eighty thousand men to hew in the mountains, and thirty-six hundred men to oversee them. He sent to Hiram, King of Tyre,³ for cedar-trees, fir-trees and algum-trees out of Lebanon,⁴ which were brought in floats by sea to Joppa,⁵ and thence carried to Jerusalem.

The length of the temple was sixty cubits, the height thirty cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits. There was a porch in the front of the house, the breadth of the house and ten cubits wide. Solomon ceiled the house with fir-trees which he overlaid with fine gold and he garnished the house with precious stones for beauty. There was a most holy house twenty cubits

¹ Ophir = ô'fir.² Moriah = mo-rî'ah.³ Tyre = tÿre.⁴ Lebanon = lëb'a-non.⁵ Joppa = jöp'pâ.

square ; in this house were two cherubim overlaid with gold, whose wings spread forth twenty cubits. He made the vail of the temple of blue and purple and crimson and fine linen, embroidered with cherubim. There were before the temple two pillars made of brass, of eighteen cubits high apiece and twelve cubits in circumference, one on the right hand, the other on the left. The right hand pillar Solomon named Jachin,¹ which means "it shall stand ;" the left hand pillar he named Boaz, which means "in strength ;" thus forming a kind of sentence, "It shall stand in strength."

Solomon made an altar of brass and an altar of gold ; ten candlesticks, and the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, and the snuffers, and the basins, and the spoons, and the censers were of pure gold. It took twenty years to build the temple. Everything was made ready ere it came to the spot, and there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building.

When it was all finished, Solomon placed in the most holy house, even under the wings of the cherubim, the ark, wherein was the covenant of the Lord, that He made with the children of Israel.

As Solomon stood before the altar in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, he said :

¹ Jachin = jā'kin.

“ But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth ?
Behold heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee ;
How much less this house which I have built !
Hearken, therefore, unto the supplications of thy people,—
Israel ;
Hear thou from thy dwelling place, even from heaven ;
And then when thou hearest, forgive.”

So the king and all the people dedicated the temple with burnt offerings and sacrifices. They kept a feast of seven days ; other ceremonies consumed many more days, until on the twenty-third day Solomon sent the people away into their tents, glad and merry in heart.

King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. He reigned over all Israel forty years. Then Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David, his father.

SUGGESTED READINGS :

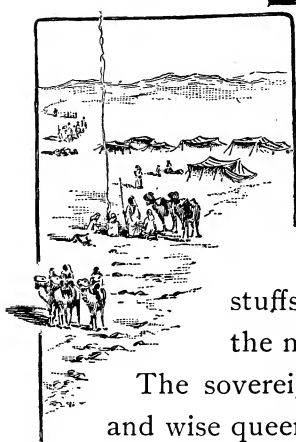
The Proverbs.

Ecclesiastes.

The Song of Solomon.

Anticipations of Prophecy . . . *William Cowper.*

XIX.—THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

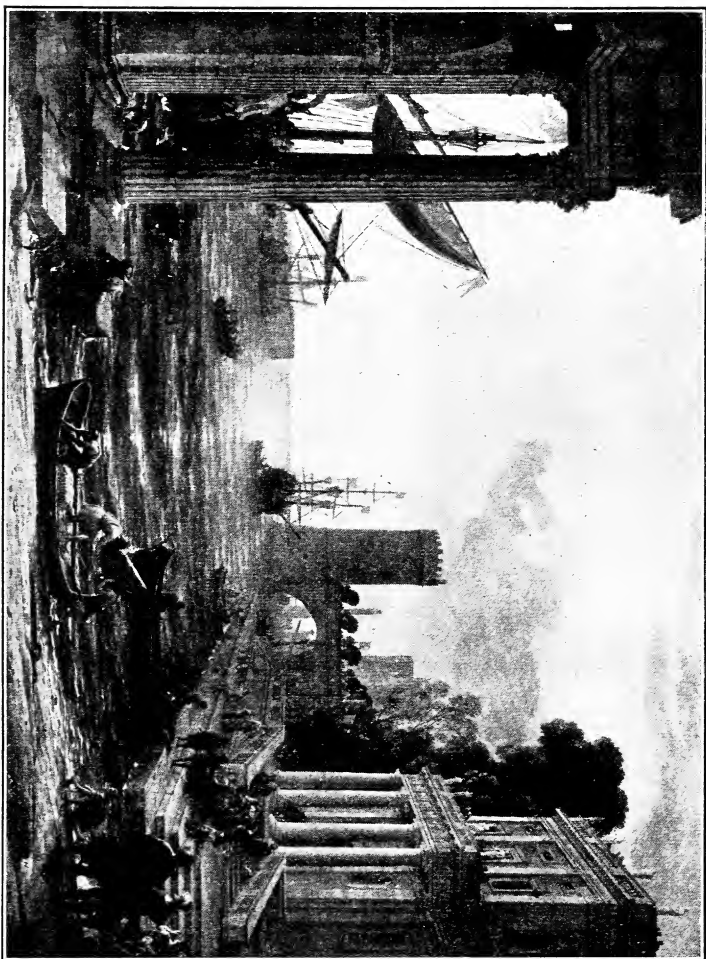


THE southern part of Arabia was once called Sheba.¹ The people of Sheba were powerful and wealthy, and they controlled the sea and caravan traffic in gold, spices, ivory, ebony and finely woven stuffs. They worshiped the sun and the moon.

The sovereign of this people was a beautiful and wise queen. She heard of the fame of Solomon and prepared to visit him in order to prove his wisdom with hard questions. She came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bore spices, and very much gold and precious stones. These she brought as gifts to him according to custom, and to show him something of the splendor of her realm.

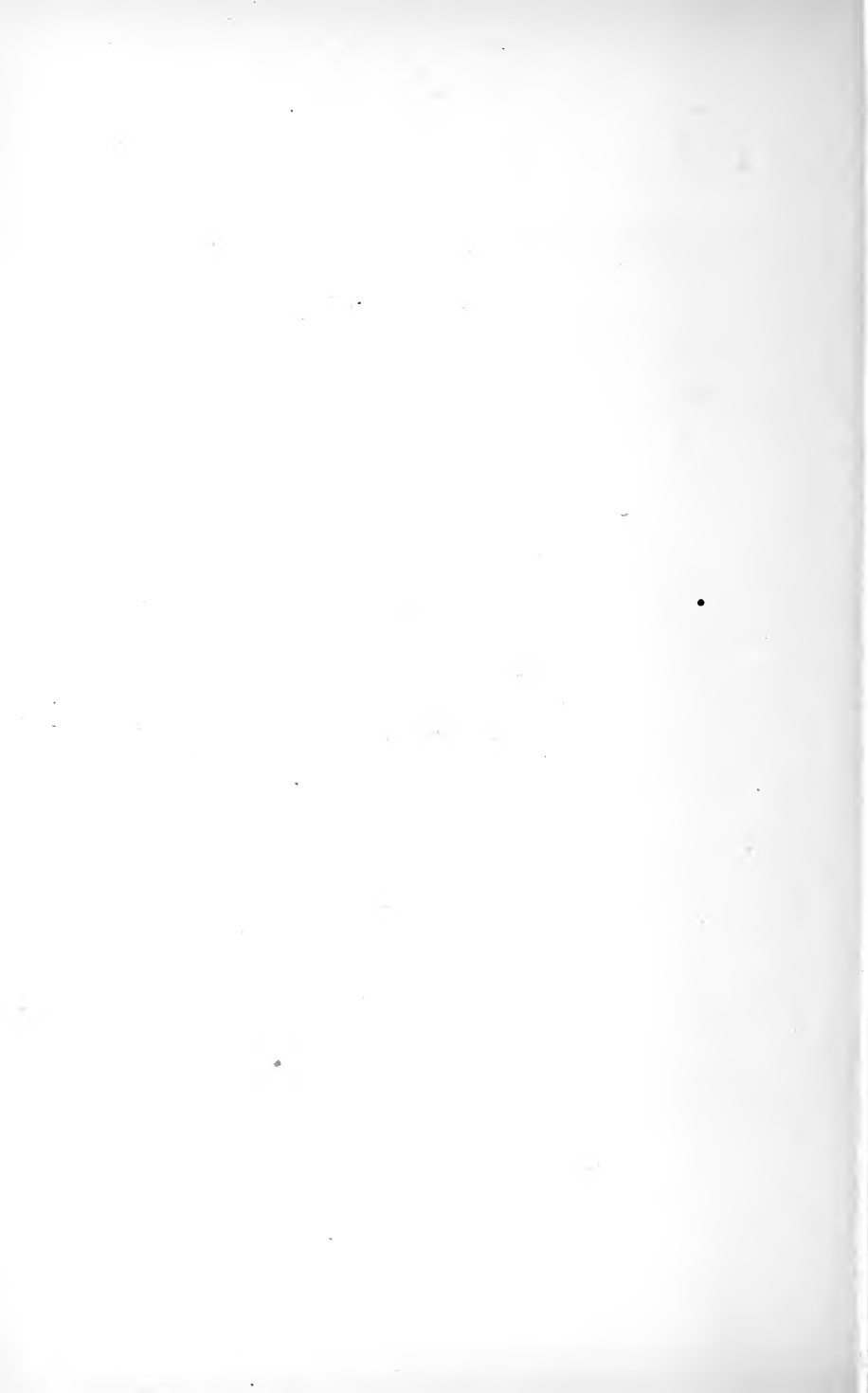
When she saw him she communed with him of all that was in her heart. Very hard questions she asked him and a great number of them, but Solomon answered every one with great wisdom. When the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of

¹ Sheba = shē'ba.



THE EMBARKATION OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

From the painting by Claude Lorraine



his ministers, and their apparel, and his cup-bearers, and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her. Her own kingdom that she had thought so glorious, now seemed small and insignificant.

She said to the king, "It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. But I did not believe it, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, that stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom! Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighteth in thee to set thee on the throne of Israel, to do judgment and justice."

The queen of Sheba gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store and precious stones. Never again did King Solomon receive such an abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to him. In return, King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba whatsoever she asked, besides many rare gifts of his own royal bounty. Then she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

SOLOMON AND THE BEES

WHEN Solomon was reigning in his glory,
Unto his throne the queen of Sheba came—
So in the Talmud you may read the story—
Drawn by the magic of the monarch's fame,
To see the splendors of his court, and bring
Some fitting tribute to the mighty king.

Nor this alone : much had her highness heard
What flowers of learning graced the royal speech ;
What gems of wisdom dropped with every word ;
What wholesome lessons he was wont to teach
In pleasing proverbs ; and she wished, in sooth,
To know if rumor spoke the simple truth.

Besides, the queen had heard (which piqued her most)
How through the deepest riddles he could spy ;
How all the curious arts that women boast
Were quite transparent to his piercing eye ;
And so the queen had come—a royal guest—
To put the sage's cunning to the test.

And straight she held before the monarch's view,
In either hand a radiant wreath of flowers ;
The one, bedecked with every charming hue,
Was newly culled from nature's choicest bowers ;

The other, no less fair in every part,
Was the rare product of divinest art.

“Which is the true and which the false?” she said.

Great Solomon was silent. All amazed,
Each wondering courtier shook his puzzled head;
While at the garlands long the monarch gazed,
As one who sees a miracle, and fain,
For very rapture, ne’er would speak again.

“Which is the true?” once more the woman asked,

Pleased at the fond amazement of the king;

“So wise a head should not be hardly tasked,
Most learned liege, with such a trivial thing!”
But still the sage was silent; it was plain
A deepening doubt perplexed the royal brain.

While thus he pondered, presently he sees,

Hard by the casement—so the story goes—

A little band of busy, bustling bees,

Hunting for honey in a withered rose.

The monarch smiled, and raised his royal head;

“Open the window!” that was all he said..

The window opened at the king’s command;

Within the rooms the eager insects flew,

And sought the flowers in Sheba’s dexter hand!

And so the king and all the courtiers knew

That wreath was nature's; and the baffled queen
Returned to tell the wonders she had seen.

My story teaches (every tale should bear

A fitting moral) that the wise may find

In trifles light as atoms of the air

Some useful lesson to enrich the mind—

Some truth designed to profit or to please—

As Israel's king learned wisdom from the bees.

John G. Saxe.

XX.—ELIJAH



ELIJAH¹ the Tishbite² was a great prophet. He lived about 910 years before Christ. Once when he hid himself from his enemies, near a brook, the ravens brought him bread and flesh; bread in the morning and flesh in the evening, that he might not feel the lack of food. But the brook dried up, and then the Lord told him to go to Zarephath³ and dwell there. When Elijah reached the gate of the city, he saw a woman gathering sticks. He asked her to fetch him a little water to drink. As she turned to fetch it, he told her to bring him a morsel of bread also. She told him she had only a handful of meal and a little oil; that she was going to make it into a little cake for her son and herself and then die.

Elijah said, "Fear not; go and do as thou hast said, but first make me a little cake, and after make for thee and thy son, for the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, saith the Lord."

She did as Elijah told her, and they all did eat many

¹ Elijah = e-lī'jah.

² Tishbite = tīsh'bīte.

³ Zarephath = zār'e-fāth.

days. The barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail.

After this the son of the woman fell sick, and his sickness was so sore that there was no breath left in him.

Then Elijah said, "Oh, Lord, my God, I pray thee, let this child's life come into him again." And the Lord heard Elijah's voice, and the child revived. Then Elijah took him to his mother and said, "Thy child liveth."

At another time Elijah reproved an idolatrous king for having four hundred and fifty false prophets. Elijah told him to bring the Israelites together on Mount Carmel and he would prove to them which was the prophet of the Lord. He ordered two bullocks. The prophets of Baal¹ were to take one, cut it in pieces, lay it on wood, put no fire under, and call upon Baal. Elijah was to take the other, do the same, and call upon the Lord. They all agreed that the God that answered by fire should be the true God.

The false prophets called upon Baal from morning even until noon, saying, "O, Baal, hear us." But no voice answered. Then Elijah mocked them and said, "Maybe your god is talking, or he is pursuing, or is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth." And they cried again, but no voice answered. Then Elijah

¹ Baal = bā'al.

built his altar and made a trench about it. Then he laid the bullock on the altar, and had four barrels of water poured over it—once, twice, three times—and the water filled the trench. Then Elijah cried, “Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.”

Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And then the people fell on their faces, and they said, “The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God.”

Elijah did not die like other men, but the Lord took him into heaven by a whirlwind. Elijah had a friend, Elisha.¹ They were together, and went to Bethel. Then they went on to Jericho. Then they journeyed to Jordan. Elijah told Elisha each time to leave him, but Elisha replied, “As my soul liveth, I will not leave thee.” When they reached the Jordan, Elijah took his mantle and wrapped it together and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry land. When on the other side, Elijah asked Elisha what he could do for him before he was taken away from him.

Elisha said, “Let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.”

Elijah told him that he had asked a hard thing, and

¹ Elisha = e-lī'shā.

continued, "Nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee."

And it came to pass as they still went on and talked, that behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

And the mantle of Elijah fell upon Elisha.

XXI.—MESHA, THE KING OF MOAB



ONCE there was a king of Moab named Mesha,¹ who had to pay tribute to Jehoram,² the king of Israel. Mesha had to render to Jehoram an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool. But Mesha rebelled. He did not intend to pay the yearly debt if he could help it.

Jehoram went to his friend, the king of Judah, and asked him if he would join him in battle against the king of Moab.

The king of Judah said, "I will go; I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses."

They decided that they would go by way of the wilderness of Edom,³ knowing that the king of Edom would join them. This he did, and the three kings, with their great armies, journeyed toward Moab. When they had marched seven days they came to a place where there was no water for the host and for the cattle that followed them. The king of Israel be-

¹ Mesha = mē'shā.

² Jehoram = je-hō'ram.

³ Edom = ē'dom.

wailed that three such kings as they were should fall into the hand of Moab. For if they had no water they must all perish. But the king of Judah said, "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord of whom we can inquire?"

A servant answered that Elisha, the son of Shaphat,¹ lived near.

The three kings sought Elisha and told him their trouble.

Elisha, the prophet, said that for the king of Judah's sake he would help them if they would have a minstrel play for him. While the minstrel played Elisha prophesied thus: "Make this valley full of ditches. Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain, yet the valley shall be filled with water that ye may drink, both ye and your cattle, and your beasts. And this is but a light thing in the sight of the Lord. He will deliver the Moabites also into your hand."

It came to pass in the morning as Elisha had said. Behold, the country was filled with water. When the Moabites heard that the three kings had come up to fight them, all that were able to wear armor stood on the border waiting.

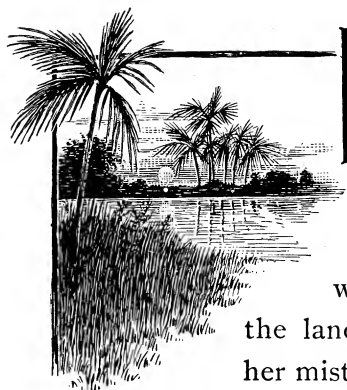
It was early in the morning, and as the sun rose the water looked as red as blood. The Moabites, thinking it was blood, and that the kings and their armies had fought among themselves and were slain, rushed to the

¹Shaphat = shā'fat.

camp of the Israelites for the spoil. But they were met by the three kings, who rose up and smote them so that they fled before them. When Mesha, the king of Moab, saw that the battle was too sore for him, he and seven hundred swordsmen tried to break through the lines, but they could not. Every man of them was slain.

Thus was Israel able to conquer Moab, because of the power of Elisha, the prophet.

XXII.—NAAMAN



NAAMAN¹ was a great and honorable captain of the Syrian king, but he was a leper. Naaman's wife was waited upon by a little maid who was brought away captive from the land of Israel. One day she told her mistress that, if her master could be with the prophet in Samaria, he would recover him of his leprosy. Her remark was repeated to Naaman, and he spoke of it to the king, who said he would write a letter to the king of Israel, and allow Naaman to take it. Naaman departed, taking ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold and ten changes of raiment. The letter that he carried read like this:

“TO THE KING OF ISRAEL :

“Now when this letter is come unto thee, I have therewith sent Naaman, my servant, to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

“SYRIA.”

When the king of Israel read the letter he rent his clothes and said, “Am I God, to kill and to make alive,

¹ Naaman = nā'a-măn.

that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Consider how he seeketh a quarrel with me."

When Elisha, the prophet of Israel, heard how his king had rent his clothes, he sent a message, asking him to send Naaman to him. So Naaman came with his horses and chariot and stood before the door of the house of Elisha, who sent word out to him to go and wash in Jordan seven times and he would have no more leprosy.

This made Naaman angry. He said, "Are not Abana¹ and Pharpar,² rivers of Damascus,³ better than all the waters of Israel?" And then he went away in a rage.

But his servants ran to him and told him that if Elisha had bidden him do some great thing, he would have done it, and they begged him to do the small thing that the prophet had commanded. Then Naaman went down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, and his flesh came again like the flesh of a little child. Then he was very thankful. He returned to Elisha and told him that he knew the God of Israel was the only God, and he would never worship or bow down to any other. He urged Elisha to take rich gifts from him, but the prophet would receive nothing.

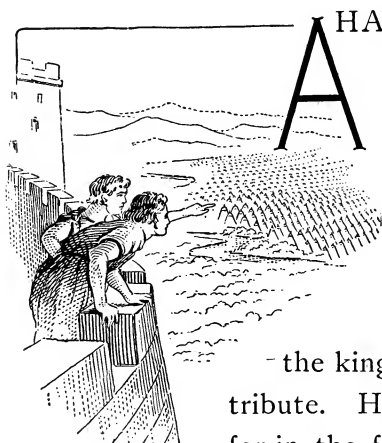
Naaman returned to his own country without taint of leprosy.

¹ Abana = äb'a-nä.

² Pharpar = phär'par.

³ Damascus = da-mäs'eus.

XXIII.—SENNACHERIB



AHAZ, king of Judah, paid tribute to the king of Assyria.¹ His son, the good King Hezekiah,² feeling that the Lord was with him because he had prospered in whatsoever he undertook, rebelled against the king of Assyria, refusing to pay tribute. Hezekiah was unwise in this, for in the fourteenth year of his reign

the new king of Assyria, Sennacherib,³ came up with a large army and conquered Hezekiah, making him pay three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. In order to raise this tribute Hezekiah had to strip off the gold with which the doors and pillars of the temple were overlaid, besides giving up all he had in his own treasury.

Sennacherib had promised to depart from Hezekiah's kingdom if he would pay the tribute, but soon after the tribute was paid, the Assyrian king changed his mind

¹ Assyria = as-sŷr'i-ā.

² Hezekiah = hēz'e-kī'ah.

³ Sennacherib = sen-nāch'e-rīb.

and determined to destroy Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah. To this end he sent a letter to Hezekiah saying that he would surely destroy the city of Jerusalem and kill or take captive all Hezekiah's people. He named over nine countries that he had destroyed utterly, and finished his letter by asking where the nine kings of those countries were.

Poor King Hezekiah was as frightened as he could be when he read that letter. He knew well how powerful the king of Assyria seemed to be, and that he had destroyed those countries and made captive their kings. Hezekiah knew, on the other hand, that everything was possible with God. He took the letter up to the temple and besought God to save His people and the Holy City from the hand of Sennacherib.

Then the prophet Isaiah assured King Hezekiah, saying, "Thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria. He shall not come unto this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same way shall he return, and shall not come into this city. For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake."

And it came to pass that night that one hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp died, smitten by the angel of the Lord. When people came to the camp the next morning, all the soldiers

were dead. Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, having no soldiers, departed to his home at Nineveh.¹

A little while after this, as he was worshiping an idol, two of his sons stole in and took his life. Thus perished the great king of Assyria.

¹ Nineveh = nîn'e-veh.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold ;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the
sea,

When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Gallilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen ;
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

And the angel of death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed ;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved and forever grew
still.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride ;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

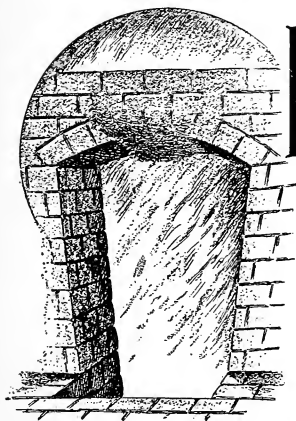
And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail ;

And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpets unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broken in the temple of Baal ;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.

Lord Byron.

XXIV.—NEBUCHADNEZZAR



NEBUCHADNEZZAR,¹ the king of Babylon, once conquered the city of Jerusalem. Among his prisoners was Daniel,² a wise young prince of Judah. God gave him knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom, and the power to understand all visions and dreams. He, and three other young princes, were often brought before the king, who found them ten times better in all matters of wisdom than any other persons in his realm.

Once the king dreamed a dream which troubled him greatly as he lay awake at night, but the next morning he had forgotten it. He called the wisest men of his kingdom and commanded them to tell him what he had dreamed and what the dream meant. They told him it was impossible for any man to tell him what he had forgotten, especially as it had really never existed and was but the baseless fabric of a dream.

When Daniel heard of the king's trouble, he asked God to tell him the dream. God revealed it to him in

¹ Nebuchadnezzar = něb'u-kad-něz' zar.

² Daniel = dăn'yel.

a vision of the night. Then Daniel went before the king and said, "The wise men cannot show the king his dream, but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets." Then Daniel told the king what he had dreamed and what it meant.

The king was pleased with Daniel, and although a worshiper of idols, he felt that Daniel's God was greater than all the gods of wood and stone.

Sometime after this Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold. He set it up in the plain of Dura¹ and commanded all his people to fall down and worship it every time they heard the sound of music. He said also that if anyone disobeyed, he should be cast into the midst of a burning, fiery furnace. The three young princes would not worship the golden image, and they were cast into the fiery furnace, but the fire did not harm them at all, not even was the smell of fire on their clothing.

When Nebuchadnezzar saw how God had delivered his servants from the fiery furnace, he said, "How great are God's signs and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and his dominion is from generation to generation."

But Nebuchadnezzar walked in pride of his own power and riches and soon forgot that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will. Then there fell a Voice from Heaven

¹ Dura = dū'rā.

saying, "O, King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken : The kingdom is departed from thee until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men."

Then Nebuchadnezzar was driven from men and did eat grass, as oxen, until he became humble. Then God established him in his kingdom again, and gave him great honor. For Nebuchadnezzar had learned through suffering to praise and extol and honor the King of Heaven, all of whose works are truth and whose ways are judgment.

RECESSIONAL

GOD of our fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

The tumult and the shouting dies—
The Captains and the Kings depart—
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

Far-called, our navies melt away—
On dune and headland sinks the fire—
So, all the pomp of yesterday
Is one with Ninevah and Tyre !
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—
Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law—

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard—
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord! *Amen.*

Rudyard Kipling.

XXV.—BELSHAZZAR



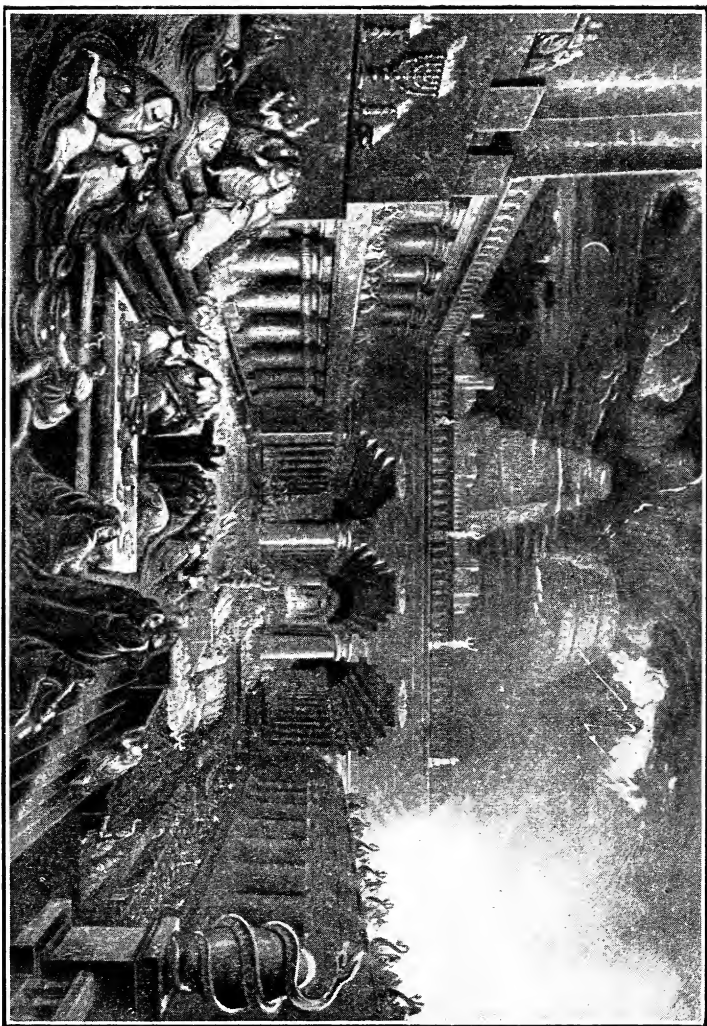
IN Daniel there was no blemish. Although a captive, he was loved and honored as long as King Nebuchadnezzar lived. Nebuchadnezzar's son, Belshazzar,¹ who was the next king, forgot his father's God and praised the gods of gold and silver, of brass, of iron, of wood and of stone.

At a great feast that Belshazzar gave to his courtiers, he saw the fingers of a man's hand write on the plaster of the wall these words: "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." The king was greatly troubled, for none of his wise men could make known the meaning of the words. His queen asked that Daniel be called to show the interpretation.

When Daniel was brought before the king he said that he would read the writing. Daniel told King Belshazzar that the meaning of the strange writing was, "God hath finished thy kingdom. Thou art weighed in the balance and art found wanting. Thy kingdom is given to the Medes² and Persians."

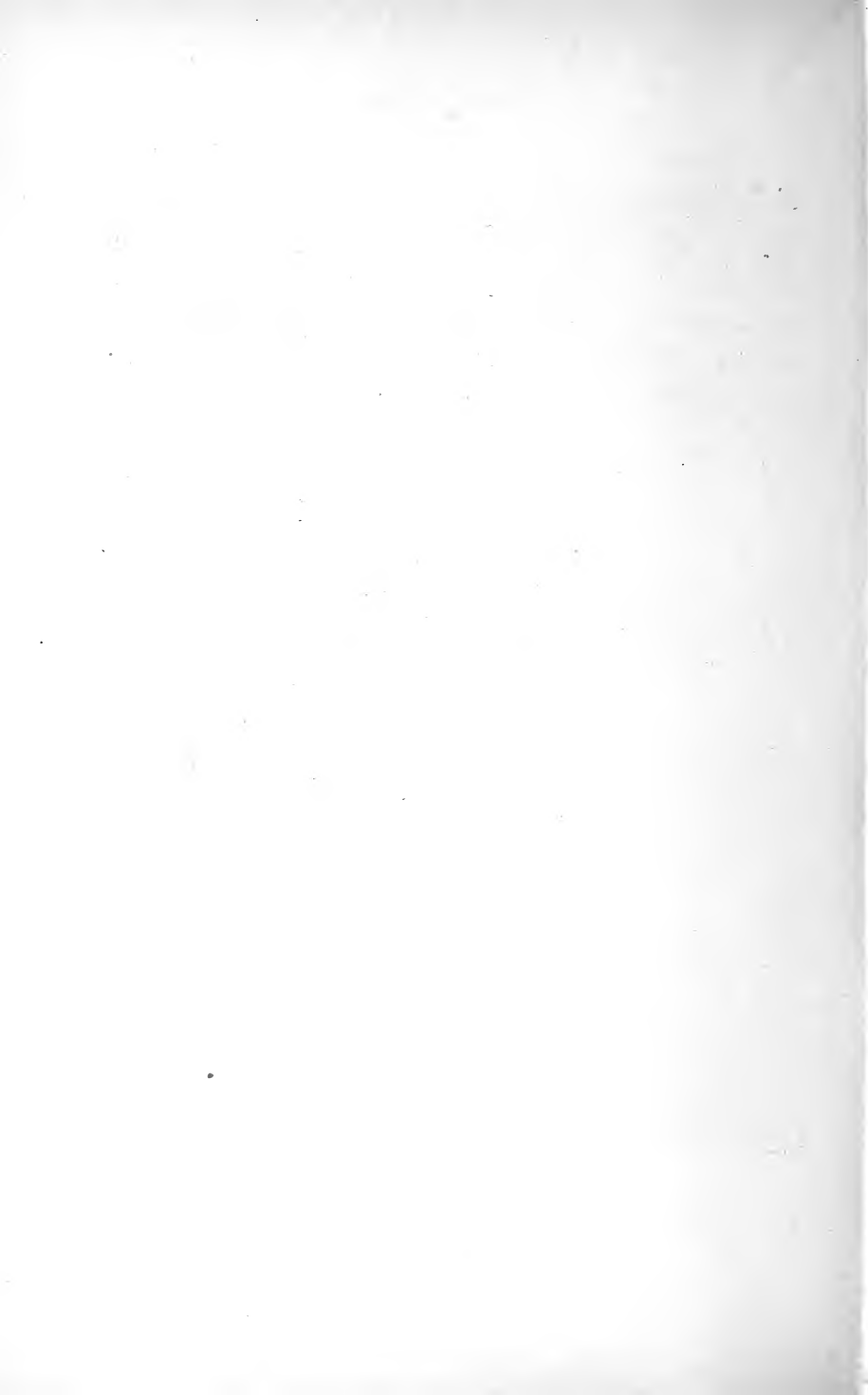
¹ Belshazzar = bēl-shāz'zar.

² Medes = mēdes.



BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST

From the painting by Martin



Belshazzar had promised great honors to whosoever should read the writing. He commanded that Daniel be clothed in scarlet and that a chain of gold be put about his neck, and that he be made the third ruler in the kingdom.

That night the words came true, for Belshazzar was slain, and Darius,¹ the Median, took the kingdom.

¹ Darius = da-rī'us.

THE VISION OF BELSHAZZAR

THE king was on his throne
The satraps throng'd the hall;
A thousand bright lamps shone,
O'er that high festival
A thousand cups of gold,
In Judah deem'd divine—
Jehovah's vessels hold
The godless heathen's wine.

In that same hour and hall,
The fingers of a hand
Came forth against the wall,
And wrote as if on sand:
The fingers of a man;
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran
And traced them like a wand.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless waxed his look,
And tremulous his voice.
“Let the men of lore appear,
The wisest of the earth,

And expound the words of fear,
Which mar our royal mirth."

Chaldea's seers are good
But here they have no skill;
And the unknown letters stood,
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore;
But now they were not sage,
They saw—but knew no more.

A captive in the land,
A stranger and a youth,
He heard the king's command,
He saw that writing's truth.
The lamps around were bright
The prophecy in view;
He read it on that night,—
The morrow proved it true.

"Belshazzar's grave is made,
His kingdom passed away,
He in the balance weigh'd,
Is light and worthless clay.
The shroud, his robe of state,
His canopy, the stone;

The Mede is at his gate!

The Persian on his throne!"

Lord Byron.

SUGGESTED READINGS:

Belshazzar *Bryan Waller Proctor* (Barry Cornwall).

To Belshazzar *Lord Byron.*

XXVI.—JOB



THERE was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job.¹ He was a perfect and an upright man whose delight was in the law of the Lord. He was very rich in sheep, camels and oxen, and was greatest of all the men in the East. This man had seven sons and three daughters. These he loved much and prayed for daily.

There were those who thought that Job loved God just because God had given him great riches and much happiness. But this was not true, as the history of Job proves. Job ceased to be prosperous, and one by one misfortunes came. First his oxen were stolen and their drivers were slain; then his sheep and their shepherds were struck by lightning; then his camels were stolen; then a great wind blew down the house in which his children were feasting, killing every one of them. But to these sorrows was added physical torment, for Job was smitten with sore boils from the soles of his feet unto his crown.

At this time, Job's three friends, Eliphaz,² the Tema-

¹ Job = jōb.

² Eliphaz = ɛl'i-fāz.

nite;¹ Bildad,² the Shuhite;³ and Zopher,⁴ the Naamathite,⁵ came to mourn with him and to comfort him. They sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him, for they saw that his grief was very great.

After that Job said, "The thing that I greatly feared has come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. Why am I not where the wicked cease from troubling and where the weary are at rest?"

Then Eliphaz said to Job, "God shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee."

But Job only moaned, "Oh that it would please God to destroy me; that He would let loose His hand and cut me off!"

Then Bildad, the Shuhite, said to Job, "Behold God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will He keep the evil doers."

Job said to him, "My soul is weary of my life." Job knew that God was not punishing him, but he did not know where his trouble came from.

Then Zopher told him that even though he was in trouble now, his age should be as the noon-day, that he should shine forth and be as the morning.

Job answered petulantly that no doubt all wisdom would die with his three friends.

¹ Temanite = tē'man-īte.

² Bildad = bīl'dād.

³ Shuhite = shū'hīte.

⁴ Zophar = zō'far.

⁵ Naamathite = nā'a-ma-thīte.

These three men argued with Job a long time, but they could not comfort him. Job was too true to his instinct of God's goodness to believe what they said. Really, these friends troubled him more than the boils. They had long arguments. The men would ask Job many questions, but they did not settle anything.

At length God asked Job many questions: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Who shut the sea with doors and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shalt thy proud waves be stayed? Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? Where is the way where light dwelleth, and as for darkness, where is the place thereof? Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow, or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail? By what way is the light parted? Hath the rain a father? Or who hath begotten the drops of the dew? Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades¹ or loose the bands of Orion?² Who provideth the raven his food? Hast thou given the horse strength, hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? Doth the eagle mount up at thy command and make her nest on high?"

Job answered: "I know that Thou canst do everything and that no thought can be withholden from Thee, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

Then the Lord accepted Job, and the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. He gave him fourteen

¹ Pleiades = plē'ya-deez.

² Orion = o-rī'on.

thousand sheep, six thousand camels, twelve hundred yoke of oxen. Also seven sons and three daughters were born to Job. And after this Job lived a hundred and forty years and saw four generations.

Creator! yes, Thy wisdom and Thy word
 Created *me*. Thou source of life and good!
 Thou spirit of my spirit, and my Lord!
 Thy light, thy love, in their bright plenitude,
 Filled me with an immortal soul, to spring
 O'er the abyss of death, and bade it wear
 The garments of eternal day, and wing
 Its heavenly flight beyond this little sphere,
 E'en to its source—to Thee, its Author there.

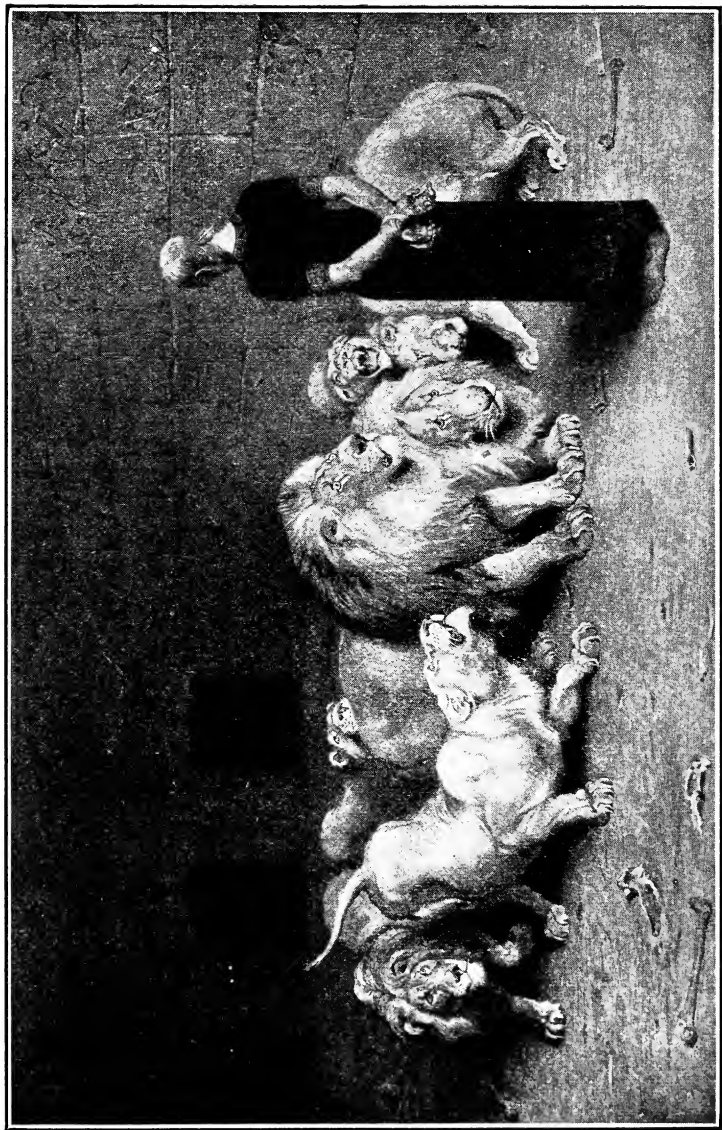
O thoughts ineffable! O vision blest!
 Though worthless our conceptions all of Thee,
 Yet shall Thy shadowed image fill our breast
 And waft its homage to Thy Deity.
 God! thus alone my lowly thoughts can soar;
 Thus seek Thy presence.—Being, wise and good!
 'Midst Thy vast works admire, obey, adore;
 And when the tongue is eloquent no more,
 The soul shall speak in tears of gratitude.

From *Derzhaven's* "Ode to God."

SUGGESTED READINGS:

These Are Thy Mighty Works, Parent of Good. *John Milton.*
 From Job *Lord Byron.*





From the painting by Rivière

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

XXVII—DANIEL



DARIUS¹ was the third king whom Daniel served. Darius placed him over forty princes. Because Daniel was so faithful, the king intended to set him above the whole realm. A great many persons were displeased because King Darius favored Daniel, and

they sought for some error in his management of the affairs of the kingdom. But they could find no fault in him. Then Daniel's enemies plotted to have the king make a law that whosoever should ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, except of King Darius, should be cast into the den of lions. This they did because they knew that Daniel kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks to God. King Darius, forgetful of Daniel's custom, made the law in writing and signed it.

This pleased Daniel's enemies, who watched and saw him praying to his God just as he had done before the king made the law. Then they went to the king. They reminded him that a law once made could not

¹Darius = da-rī'us.

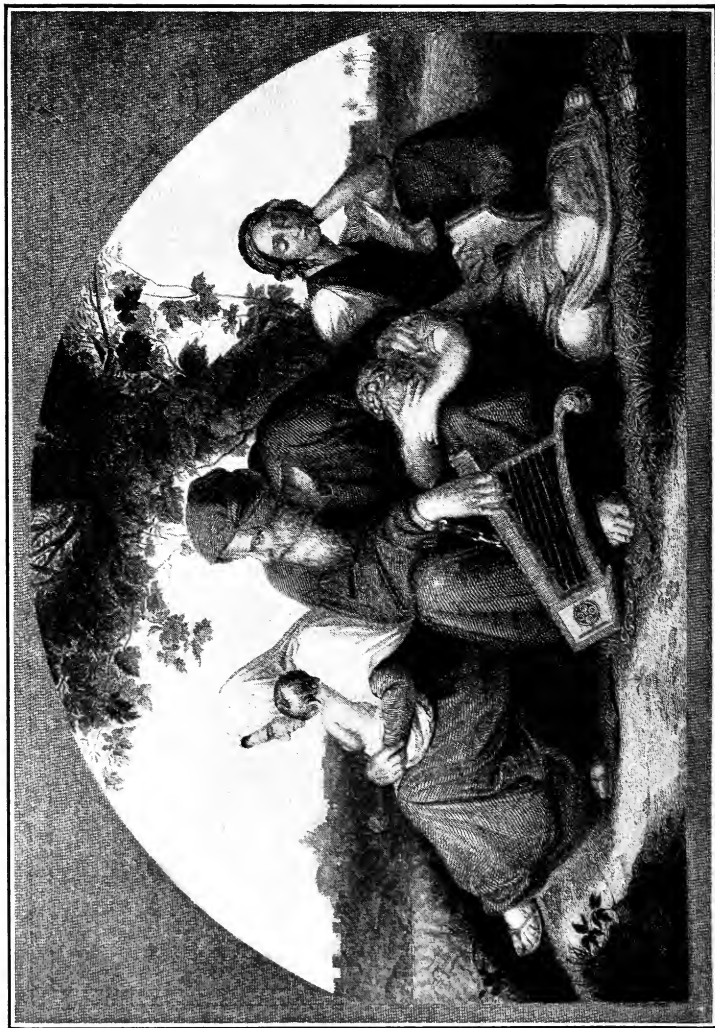
be changed. They told him that Daniel was disobeying the law every day, and said he must be cast into the den of lions. The king was sore displeased with himself for making the law, and labored all day to deliver Daniel, but there seemed no way. When they cast Daniel into the den, the king said to him, "Thy God, whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee." The den was closed, and Daniel was left alone with the lions. King Darius went back to his palace and fasted all night. He would hear no music, for he was very sorrowful.

Early next morning he hurried to the den of lions, and, thinking they had devoured Daniel, cried out in great sorrow.

But Daniel's voice replied, "O, king, live forever! My God hath sent His angel and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me."

The king, exceedingly glad that no manner of hurt was found on Daniel, commanded that he be taken out of the den.

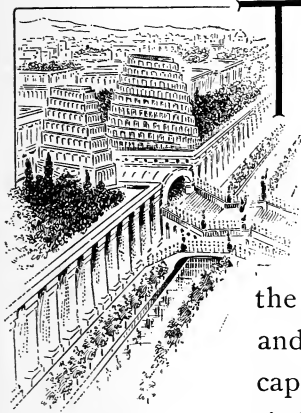
Then the king made another law, and this is what it said: "I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. He delivereth and rescueth, and worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."



From the painting by Bendemann

THE CAPTIVES IN BABYLON

XXVIII.—THE CAPTIVES AT BABYLON



THE great king Nebuchadnezzar captured the city of Jerusalem four times. After the third capture, he carried home to Babylon¹ all its treasures and many of its inhabitants. The temple and all the palaces of Jerusalem were burned and the wall was broken down. The captives whom Nebuchadnezzar carried to Babylon became servants to

him and to his sons. Year after year these captives mourned in secret for the home they had lost. Taunting foes required them to sing the songs of Zion, but their voices were choked with weeping, and in sullen woe they hung their harps on the willow-trees and refused to sing.

Cyrus,² the founder of the Persian empire, proved to these people a guardian and a liberator. The prophet Isaiah had foretold that Cyrus should rebuild the temple at Jerusalem and that the children of Israel should be delivered from their oppressors. It happened just as Isaiah had said: the children of the captivity returned to

¹ Babylon = bāb'y-lon.

² Cyrus = çy'rus.

Jerusalem, laden with gold and silver, and began joyfully to build up again and to set up anew the walls, when Cyrus, their friend, died.

He was followed by a harsh king, during whose reign the building of Jerusalem languished. In the beginning of his reign he sent a troop of horsemen and a multitude of people in battle array to put an immediate stop to this work so dear to the heart of Israel.

But in time he was gathered to his fathers and Darius reigned. He resumed the building of the temple and saw it finished.

“BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT
DOWN AND WEPT”

WE sat down and wept by the waters
Of Babel, and thought of the day
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
Made Salem's high places his prey;
And ye, oh her desolate daughters!
Were scattered all weeping away.

While sadly we gazed on the river
Which rolled on in freedom below,
They demanded the song; but, oh never
That triumph the stranger shall know!
May this right hand be withered forever,
Ere it string our high harp for the foe!

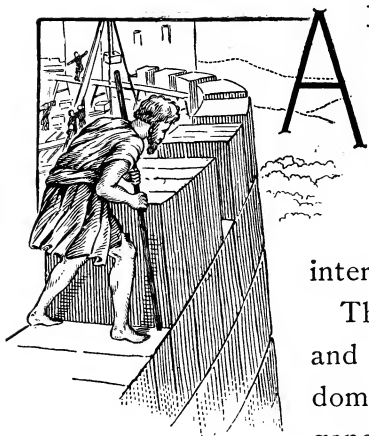
On the willow that harp is suspended,—
Oh Salem! its sound should be free;
And the hour when thy glories were ended,
But left me that token of thee:
And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me!

Lord Byron.

SUGGESTED READING :

Hebrew Melodies *Lord Byron.*

XXIX.—ZOROBABEL



A PRETTY story is related of how Darius was led to command that the Hebrew children should be allowed to finish the re-building of Jerusalem and the temple without interruption.

The king had made a great feast and invited everybody in his kingdom. After all the guests had gone home, Darius the king, went to his bedchamber and slept. The three young men of the guard who protected the king while he slept, fell into conversation. One said, "Let each of us write a sentence. To the writer of the sentence that shall surpass the others in wisdom, shall King Darius give great gifts. He shall be clothed in purple, shall drink in gold, shall sleep upon gold, shall have a chariot with bridles of gold and a head tire of fine linen, and a chain about his neck; he shall sit next to Darius and be called the king's cousin."

Then each wrote his sentence, sealed it, and laid it under the king's pillow. The first wrote, "Wine is the strongest." The second wrote, "The king is the strong-

est." The third wrote, "Women are strongest; but above all things, Truth beareth away the victory."

Now when the king rose, he read the writings. Then he sent for all the learned men of his kingdom, and being seated in the royal seat of judgment had the writings read before them. Then he ordered the young men to be called that they might argue each his own sentence.

The first young man said: "O ye men, how exceeding strong is wine! It causeth all men to err that drink it. It maketh the mind of the king and of the fatherless child to be all one. The mind of the bondman and of the free man, of the poor man, and of the rich man, are all one. A man remembereth nothing, neither debts, nor king. They forget their love to their brethren and friends, and a little after they draw out their swords. O ye men, is not wine the strongest, that enforceth to do thus?"

Then the second young man said: "O ye men, do not men excel in strength who bear rule over land and sea? Yet the king is more mighty, for he has dominion over them, and what he commands, they do. If he bid them make war, they do it. If he send them out against enemies, they go, and break down mountains, walls and towers. They stay, and are slain. If they have victory they bring the spoil to the king. The husbandman must pay tribute to the king. If the king command to kill, they kill; if he command to spare,

they spare; if he command to smite, they smite; if he command to make desolate, they make desolate; if he command to build, they build; if he command to cut down, they cut down; if he command to plant, they plant. So all his people and his armies obey him; furthermore he lieth down, he eateth and drinketh, and these watch round about him, neither may anyone depart, neither disobey him in anything. O ye men, how should not the king be mightiest when in such sort he is obeyed?"

Then the third young man, Zorobabel,¹ said: "O ye men, it is not the king, nor wine that excelleth. Women have borne the king and all the people in his kingdom. Women have nourished all them that plant vineyards. They make garments for men; they bring glory to men. A man leaveth his own father and cleaveth unto his wife. Do not men labor and toil and bring all that he hath to the woman? Many also have perished for women. Is not the king great in power? Do not all fear to touch him? Yet did I not see the queen take the crown from the king's head and set it upon her own head? She struck the king with her left hand and laughed, and the king gazed on her and laughed also. O ye men, are not women strong, seeing they do this? O ye men, great is the earth, high is the heaven, swift is the sun in his course! Is He not great that made these things? Therefore great is the truth

¹ Zorobabel = zo-röb'a-běl.

and stronger than all things. As for the truth, it endureth, and it is always strong ; it liveth and conquereth forever more. With truth there is no accepting of rewards, but she doeth the thing that is just. Truth is the strength, kingdom, power and majesty of all ages. Blessed be the God of truth ! ”

Then all the people shouted and said : “ Great is truth. ” The king said to Zorobabel : “ Ask what thou wilt, because thou art found wisest ; thou shalt sit next me and be called my cousin. ”

Then said Zorobabel unto the king : “ Remember the vow of Cyrus to build Jerusalem and to build the temple which the Edomites burned when Judea was made desolate. O lord the king, this is the princely liberality I require. I desire that thou make good the vow that Cyrus vowed to the King of Heaven. ”

Then the king stood up and kissed Zorobabel and did even as he wished. He wrote letters to all having charge of his provinces to convey safely the children of the captivity to Jerusalem. He gave them their freedom and said that Israel should not pay tribute. He commanded that there should be given yearly twenty and ten talents until the temple was built. He sent back all the vessels of gold and of silver and of brass that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem to Babylon.

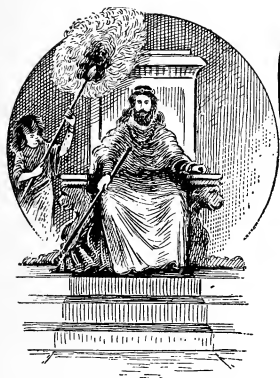
So Zorobabel took the letters, and went out and came to Babylon and told all his captive nation, and they praised the God of their fathers, because He had given

them freedom and liberty to go up and build Jerusalem and the temple which is called by His name. Then the Hebrew children feasted with instruments of music and gladness seven days.

SUGGESTED READINGS :

The Triumph of Woman *Robert Southey.*
Hymn of the Daughters of Jerusalem . . . *Milman.*
Rebecca's Hymn. From *Sir W. Scott's "Ivanhoe."*

XXX.—ESTHER



ONCE there was a great king who reigned over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces. His name was Ahasuerus.¹ In the seventh year of his reign he set the royal crown upon the head of Esther² and made her queen. She had been raised by Mordecai³ the Jew, her uncle, for her father and her mother were dead. Esther loved Mordecai very much. Once Mordecai heard two men plotting to kill the king; he told Esther who told the king, and thus saved his life.

The king had a prince by the name of Haman, to whom all the people bowed. But Mordecai the Jew did not bow to him. This made Haman angry, and he determined to destroy all the Jews throughout the whole kingdom.

He asked the king to make a decree and sign it that all the Jews, both young and old, little children and women, should perish in one day, even the thirteenth day of the twelfth month. And the king signed it.

¹ Ahasuerus = a-hās'u-ē'rus.

² Esther = ěs'ter.

³ Mordecai = môr'de-ċai.

When the Jews heard of it there was great mourning, fasting, weeping and wailing, and many lay in sackcloth and ashes. Mordecai dressed in sackcloth and came even unto the king's gate.

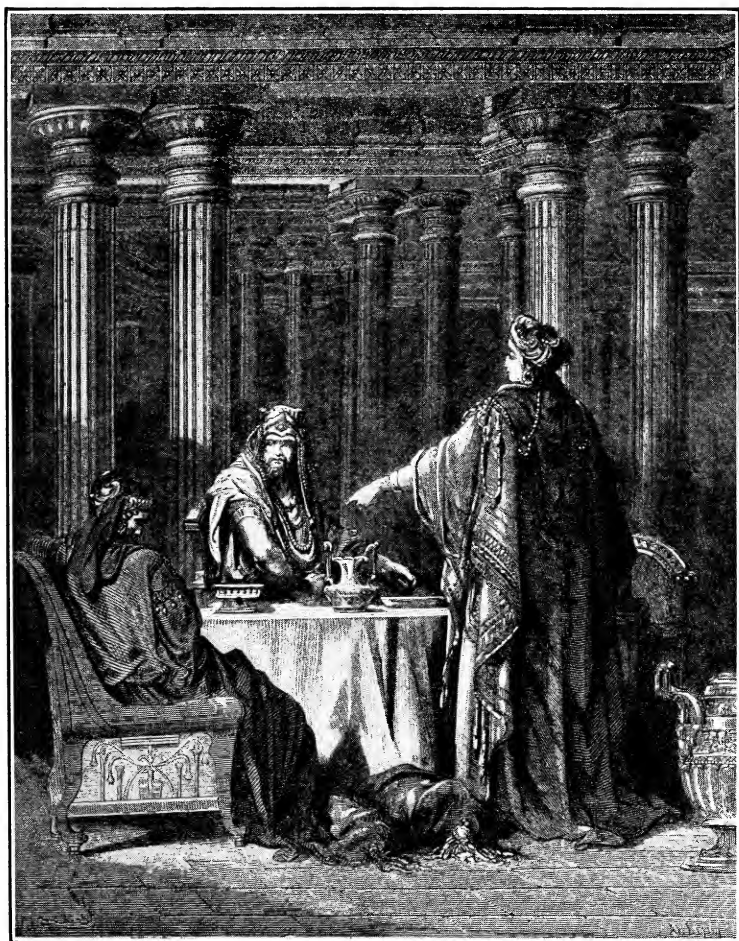
When Esther, the queen, heard this, she sent messages to her uncle Mordecai, one of which was: "Go, gather together all the Jews and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days; I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and then I will go unto the king, and if I perish, I perish." Esther knew that anyone who went before the king unless called was liable to be put to death.

After the third day, she put on her royal apparel and went to the king who said to her: "What wilt thou, Queen Esther? It shall be given thee to the half of the kingdom." Esther asked the king to come to a banquet and bring Haman with him. While they were at supper, the king asked her again: "What is thy petition?" But she only invited them to another banquet.

Now Haman had a gallows fifty cubits high built for Mordecai, because the king had honored Mordecai more than he had Haman.

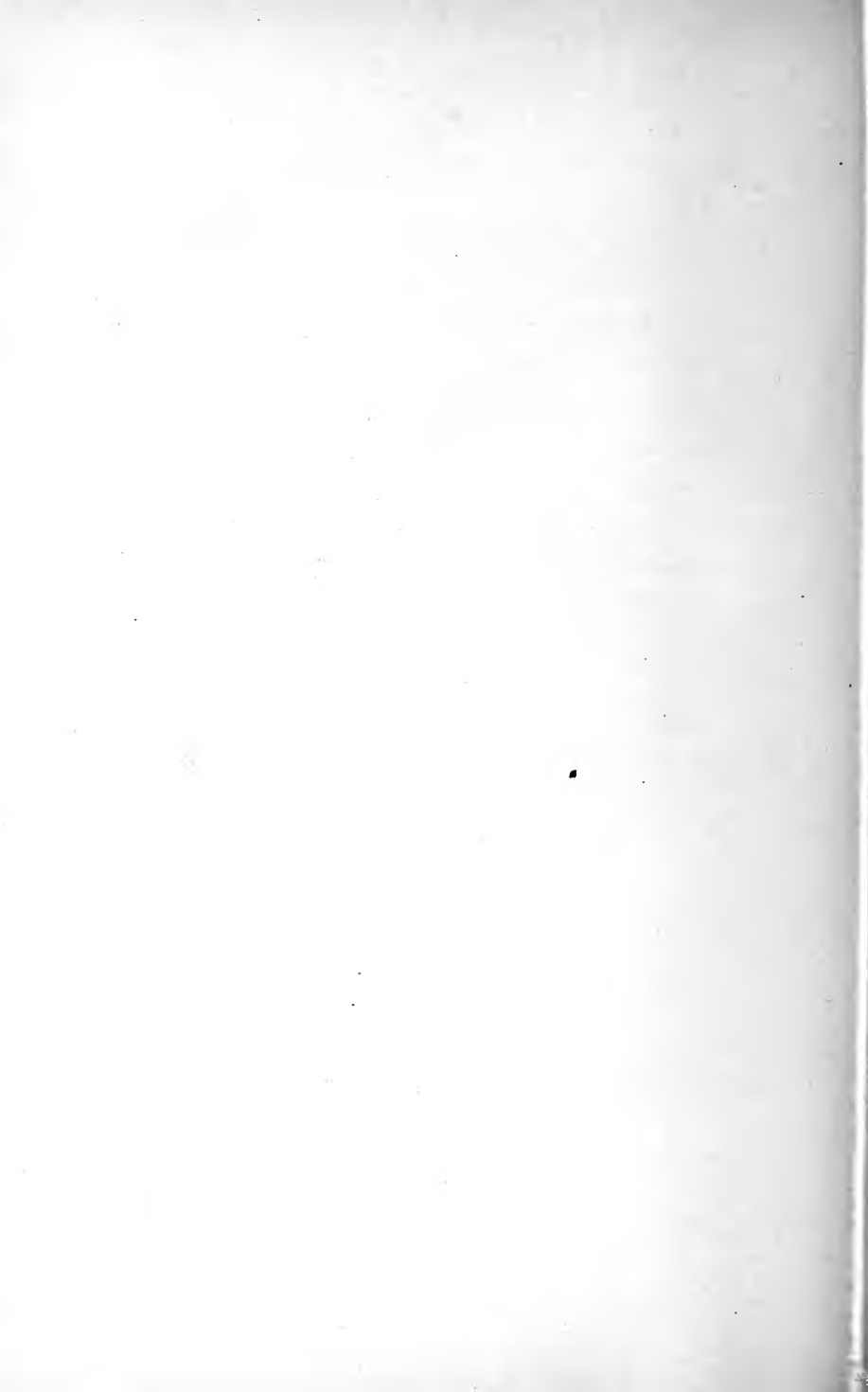
When the king and Haman had come to Esther's second banquet, the king asked her a third time: "What is thy petition, Queen Esther?"

And Esther said: "If I have found favor in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition and my people at my request; for



ESTHER ACCUSING HAMAN

Gustav Doré



we are sold, I and my people to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish."

Then the king was very angry and said: "Who is he and where is he that durst do so?"

"Esther said: "The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman." Then Haman was afraid.

The king, arising from the banquet, in his wrath went into the palace-garden. When he returned one of the chamberlains of the king said: "Behold the gallows fifty cubits high that Haman had made for Mordecai."

Then the king said: "Hang Haman thereon." Then was the king's wrath pacified.

After that the good king Ahasuerus saved all the Jews. He gave Mordecai royal apparel of blue and white, and a crown of gold. In the reign of Ahasuerus the Jews had light and gladness and joy and honor.

ESTHER

.
Ahasuerus. Believe me, dearest Esther,
This sceptre, and the homage fear inspires
Have little charm for me ; the pomp of power
Is oft a burden to its sad possessor.
In thee, thee only, do I find a grace
That never palls nor loses its attraction.
How sweet the charm of loveliness and virtue !
In Esther breathes the very soul of peace
And innocence. Dark shadows flee before her,
She pours bright sunshine into days of gloom.
With thee beside me seated on this throne
I fear no more the wrath of adverse stars ;
My diadem, fair Esther, seems to borrow
A lustre from thy brow that gods themselves
Might envy. Answer boldly then, nor hide
What urgent purpose leads thy footsteps hither.
What anxious cares perplex thy troubled breast ?
Thine eyes are raised to heaven as I speak.
Tell me thy wish ; it shall be gratified,
If its success depends on human hand.

Esther. O kindness reassuring to the heart
It honors ! No light matter prompts my prayer.

.

Lo, misery or happiness awaits me ;
Which it shall be hangs trembling on thy will.
One word from thee, ending my sore suspense,
Can render Esther happiest of queens.
If Esther has found favor in thy sight,
If ere thou wast disposed to grant her wishes,
Vouchsafe thy presence at her board to-day,
Let Esther entertain her sovereign lord,
And Haman be admitted to the banquet.
Then, in his hearing, I will dare to utter
What in his absence I must still conceal.

.

Ahasuerus. All shall tremble at the name
Of Esther's God. Rebuild His temple, fill
Your wasted cities ; let your happy seed
With sacred triumph celebrate this day,
And in their memory live my name for aye !

GOD, THE DEFENSE OF HIS PEOPLE

1. WHO is this that cometh from Edom
With dyed garments from Bozrah?
This, that is glorious in his apparel,
Traveling in the greatness of his strength?
I, that speak in righteousness,
Mighty to save.

2. Wherefore art thou red in thy apparel,
And thy garments like him that treadeth in the
wine-fat?
I have trodden the wine-press alone :
And of the people there was none with me ;
For I will tread them in mine anger,
And trample them in my fury ;
And their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments,
And I will stain all my raiment.
For the day of vengeance is in my heart,
And the year of my redeemed is come.
I looked, and there was none to help !
And I wondered, that there was none to behold !
Therefore, mine own arm brought salvation unto me ;
And my fury, it upheld me.
I will tread down the people in mine anger,

And make them drunk in my fury,
And I will bring down their strength to the
earth.

3. I will mention the loving kindness of the Lord,
And the praises of the Lord,
According to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us,
And the great goodness toward the house of Is-
rael,
Which he hath bestowed on them according to
his mercies, .
And according to the multitude of his loving kind-
nesses.
For he said: Surely they are my people,
Children that will not lie;
So he was their Saviour.
In all their affliction he was afflicted,
And the angel of his presence saved them;
In his love and in his pity he redeemed them;
And he bare them and carried them all the days
of old.
But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit;
Therefore he has turned to be their enemy,
And he fought against them.

4. Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and
his people, saying,
Where is he that brought them up out of the sea

With the shepherd and his flock?
Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him?
That led them by the right hand of Moses, with
his glorious arm,
Dividing the water before them,
To make himself an everlasting name?
That led them through the deep,
As a horse in the wilderness, that they should not
stumble?

5. Look down from heaven,
And behold from the habitation of thy holiness
and of thy glory;
Where is thy zeal and thy strength,
The sounding of thy bowels, and of thy mercies
toward me?
Are they restrained?
Doubtless thou art our Father,
Though Abraham be ignorant of us,
And Israel acknowledge us not;
Thou, O Lord! art our Father,
Our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.

ISAIAH, LXIII.

GOD'S GOODNESS TO SUCH AS FEAR HIM

1. FRET not thyself because of evil doers,
Neither be thou envious against the workers of
iniquity :
For they shall be cut down like the grass,
And wither as the green herb.
Trust in the Lord and do good ;
So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou
shalt be fed.
Delight thyself also in the Lord,
And he shall give thee the desires of thy heart.
Commit thy way unto the Lord ;
Trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.
And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as
the light,
And thy judgment as the noon-day.
Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him.
2. Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth
in his way,
Because of the man who bringeth wicked devices
to pass.
Cease from anger and forsake wrath ;
Fret not thyself, in anywise, to do evil,
For evil-doers shall be cut off :

But those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth.

For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be;
Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

But the meek shall inherit the earth,
And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

3. The wicked plotteth against the just,
And gnasheth upon him with his teeth.
The Lord shall laugh at him,
For he seeth that his day is coming.
The wicked have drawn out the sword,
And have bent their bow,
To cast down the poor and needy,
And to slay such as are of upright conversation.
Their sword shall enter into their own heart,
And their bows shall be broken.

4. A little, that a righteous man hath,
Is better than the riches of many wicked;
For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,
But the Lord upholdeth the righteous.
The Lord knoweth the days of the upright,
And their inheritance shall be forever;
They shall not be ashamed in the evil time;
And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied,

But the wicked shall perish,
And the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat
of lambs.

They shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.

The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again;
But the righteous showeth mercy and giveth.
For such as are blessed of him shall inherit the earth;
And they that are cursed of him shall be cut off.
The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord,
And he delighteth in his way;
Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down.
For the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.

5. I have been young, and now am old,
Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his seed begging bread.
He is ever merciful and lendeth,
And his seed is blessed.

6. Depart from evil and do good;
And dwell forever-more.
For the Lord loveth judgment,
And forsaketh not his saints;
They are preserved forever:
But the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.
The righteous shall inherit the land,
And dwell therein forever.
The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom,

And his tongue talketh of judgment;
The law of his God is in his heart;
None of his steps shall slide.
The wicked watcheth the righteous,
And seeketh to slay him.
The Lord will not leave him in his hand,
Nor condemn him when he is judged.
Wait on the Lord and keep his way,
And he shall exalt thee to inherit the land;
When the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.
I have seen the wicked in great power,
And spreading himself like a green bay-tree;
Yet he passed away, and lo, he was not;
Yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

7. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright,
For the end of that man is peace.
But the transgressors shall be destroyed together,
The end of the wicked shall be cut off,
But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord.
He is their strength in the time of trouble;
And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them;
He shall deliver them from the wicked, and save
them,
Because they trust in him.

PSALM XXXVII.

GOD'S PROTECTING CARE

HE that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

I will say of the Lord,
He is my refuge and my fortress; my God:
In him will I trust.

Surely he shall deliver thee
From the snare of the fowler,
And from the noisome pestilence.

He shall cover thee with his feathers,
And under his wings shalt thou trust;
His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.
Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night;
Nor for the arrow that flieth by day;
Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness;
Nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day.
A thousand shall fall at thy side,
And ten thousand at thy right hand;
But it shall not come nigh thee.
Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold
And see the reward of the wicked.
Because thou hast made the Lord

Which is my refuge,
Even the most High,
Thy habitation:

There shall no evil befall thee,
Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.
For he shall give his angels charge over thee,

To keep thee in all thy ways.
They shall bear thee up in their hands,
Lest thou dash thy foot against the stone,
Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder;
The young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample
under foot,

Because he hath set his love upon me,

Therefore will I deliver him;
I will set him on high, because he hath known my
name.

He shall call upon me and I will answer him;

I will be with him in trouble;

I will deliver him and honor him.

With long life will I satisfy him,

And shew him my salvation.

PSALM XCI.

THE GOODNESS OF GOD

1. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

And all that is within me, bless his holy name!

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

And forget not all his benefits;

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;

Who healeth all thy diseases;

Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;

Who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies;

Who satisfied thy mouth with good things;

So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

2. The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment

For all that are oppressed.

He made known his ways unto Moses,

His acts unto the children of Israel.

The Lord is merciful and gracious,

Slow to anger and plenteous in mercy

He will not always chide;

Neither will he keep his anger forever.

He hath not dealt with us after our sins;

Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

For as the heaven is high above the earth,
So great is his mercy toward them that fear him;
As far as the east is from the west,
So far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

3. Like as a father pitieth his children,
So the Lord pitieth them that fear him;
For he knoweth our frame;
He remembereth that we are dust.
As for man, his days are as grass:
As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.
For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone;
And the place thereof shall know it no more.
But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to
everlasting
Upon them that fear him,
And his righteousness unto children's children;
To such as keep his covenant,
And to those that remember his commandments
to do them.

4. The Lord hath prepared his throne in the
heavens;
And his kingdom ruleth over all.
Bless the Lord, ye, his angels, that excel in
strength,
That do his commandments, hearkening unto the
voice of his word.

Bless the Lord, all ye his hosts;
Ye ministers of his that do his pleasure.
Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of
his dominion:
Bless the Lord, O my soul.

PSALM CIII.

APPROACH OF A DEVASTATING ARMY

1. BLOW ye the trumpet in Zion,
And sound an alarm in mine holy mountain :
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble :
For the day of the Lord cometh, for it is near ;
A day of darkness and gloom :
A day of clouds, and of thick darkness,
As a dusk spread upon the mountains :
Cometh a numerous people and strong ;
Like them, there hath not been of old time,
And after them, there shall not be,
Even to the years of many generations.
2. Before them, a fire devoureth,
And behind, a flame burneth ;
The land is as the garden of Eden before them,
And behind them, a desolate wilderness ;
Yea, and nothing shall escape them.
Their appearance shall be like the appearance of
horses,
And like horsemen shall they run.
Like the sound of chariots, on the tops of the
mountain, shall they leap ;
Like the sound of a flame of fire, which devoureth
stubble ;

They shall be like a strong people, set in battle array.

3. Before them, shall the people be much pained :
 All faces shall gather blackness.
 They shall run like mighty men ;
 Like warriors shall they climb the wall ;
 And they shall march every one in his way ;
 Neither shall they turn aside from their paths ;
 Neither shall one thrust another ;
 They shall march each in his road ;
 And if they fall upon the sword, they shall not
 be wounded.
 They shall run to and fro in the city ;
 They shall run upon the wall, they shall climb
 up into the houses ;
 They shall enter in at the window like a thief.
 Before them the earth quaketh, the heavens trem-
 ble :
 The sun and the moon are darkened ;
 And the stars withdraw their shining.
4. And Jehovah shall utter his voice before his
 army ;
 For his camp is very great,
 And the day of the Lord is very great
 And very terrible, and who shall be able to bear
 it ?

Yet, even now, saith Jehovah,
Turn ye unto me with all your heart,
With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.
And rend your hearts, and not your garments,
And turn unto Jehovah your God :
For he is gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger, and of great kindness,
And repenteth him of evil.

JOEL, II.

LIST OF PROPER NAMES

Aaron (â'ron)

Ăb'a-nà

Ăb'sa-lom

A-hă's'u-ē'rus

Aiah (ā'yā)

Ăj'a-lôn

Ăm'a-lek-ite

Ăm'mon-ites

Ăm'or-ites

As-sŷ'r'i-ă

Bā'al

Băb'y-lon

Bā'ra

Be'er-shē'bā

Belial (bē'li-al)

Bēl'shăz'zar

Bēth'ēl

Bēth'le-hem

Bil'dād

Bō'az

Bōz'rah

Canaan (kā'nan)

Çŷ'rus

Da-mă's'eus

Dăn

Dăn'yel

Da-rī'us

Dēb'o-rā

Dū'rā

Ē'dom

Ē'lah

Ē'li

E-lī'jah

Ēl'i-phăz

E-lī'shā

Ē'phra-īm

Esther (ēs'ter)

Eū-phrā'teş

Găth

Gā'zā

Ġē'shur

Ġīb'e-ah

Ġīb'e-on

Ġīd'e-on

Ġīl'e-ad

Ġīl'gāl

Go-lī'ath

Hē'ber

Hē'bron

Hez'e-kī'ah

Isaac (ī'zak)

Isaiah (ī'zā-yā)

İs'ra-el

Jā'ehin

Je-hō'ram

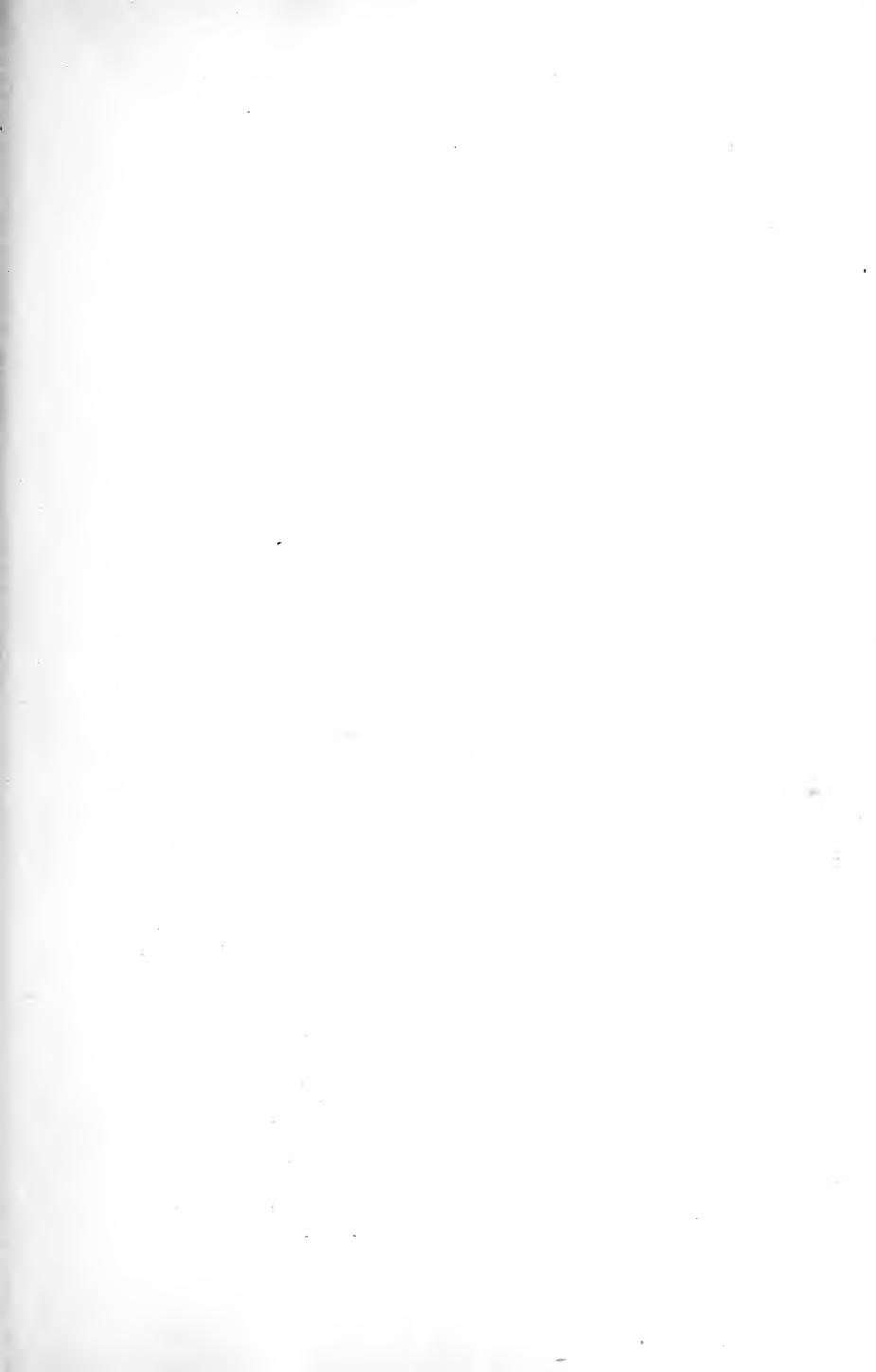
Jephthah (jěf'tha)

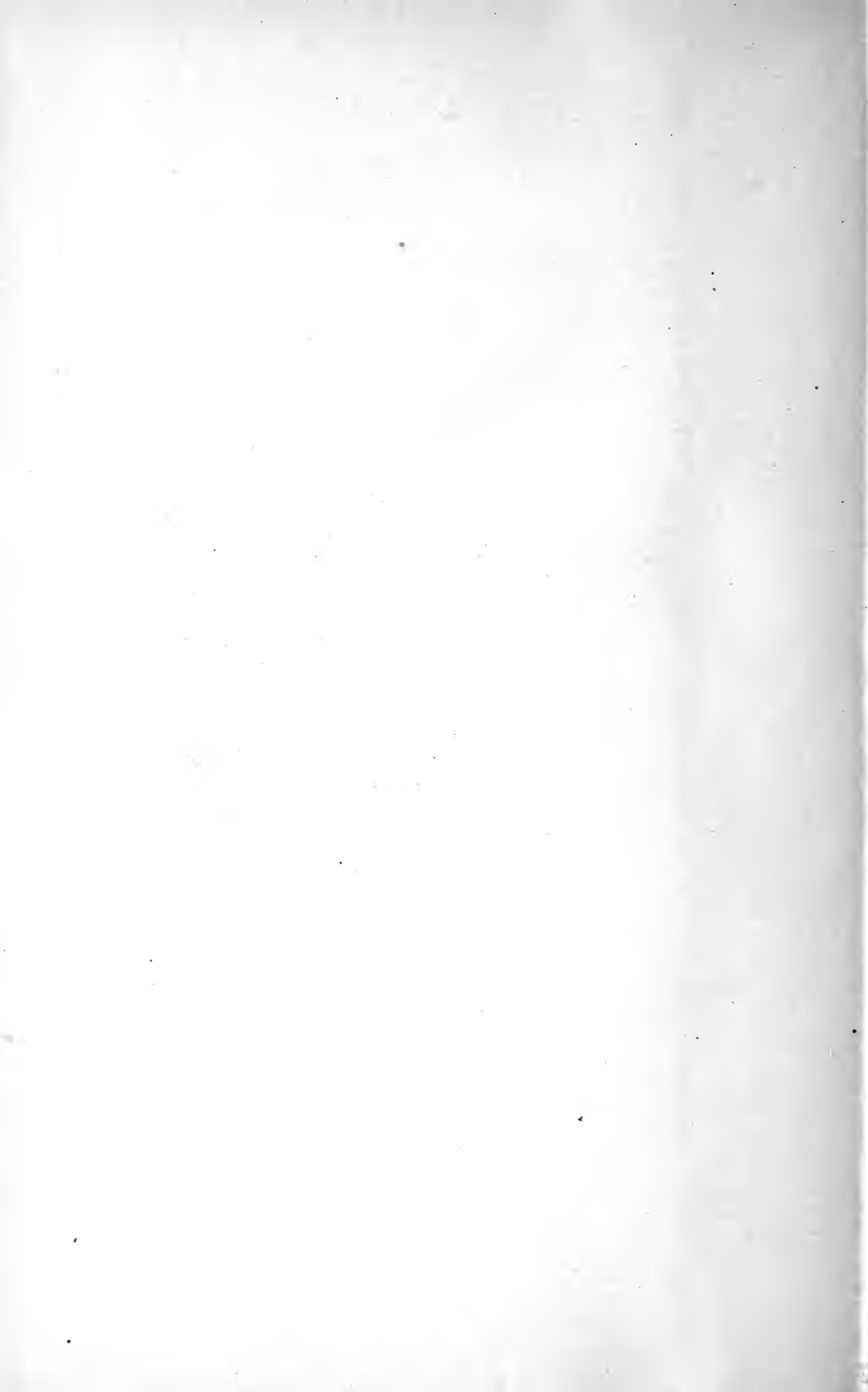
Jēr'i-ehō

Jēs'se

Jō'ăsh

Jōb	Pharaoh (fā-ro)
Jōn'a-than	Phār'par
Jōp'pā	Phī-līs'tī-à
Jōsh'u-à	Phī-līs'tīnes
Jū'dah	Pleiades (plē'ya-deez)
Ju-dē'ā	
Kē'nite	Rā'mā
	Rīz'pah
Lēb'a-non	Sām'son
Lē'vīte	Sām'u-el
Mā'a-ehah	Saul
Mēde	Sen-nāeh'e-rīb
Me-phīb'o-shēth	Shā'phat
Mē'shā	Shār'on
Mī'ehal	Shē'ba
Mid'i-an	Shū'hīte
Mīz'pah	Sī-lō'am
Mō'ab	Sīs'e-rā
Mōr'de-eāi	Sūr'i-an
Mo-rī'ah	
Nā'a-mān	Tā'bōr
Na'a-ma-thīte	Tē'man-īte
Na-ō'mī	Tīm'nath
Nāph'ta-lī	Tīsh'bīte
Nāz'a-rēth	Tyre
Nāz'a-rīte	Ůz
Nebaioth (ne-bā'yoth)	
Nē'bo	Zār'e-phāth
Nēb'u-ehad-nēz'zar	Zē'bah
Nīn'e-veh	Zēb'u-lūn
Ō'phir	Zīph
Ō-rī'on	Zō'phar
	Zo-rōb'a-bēl





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